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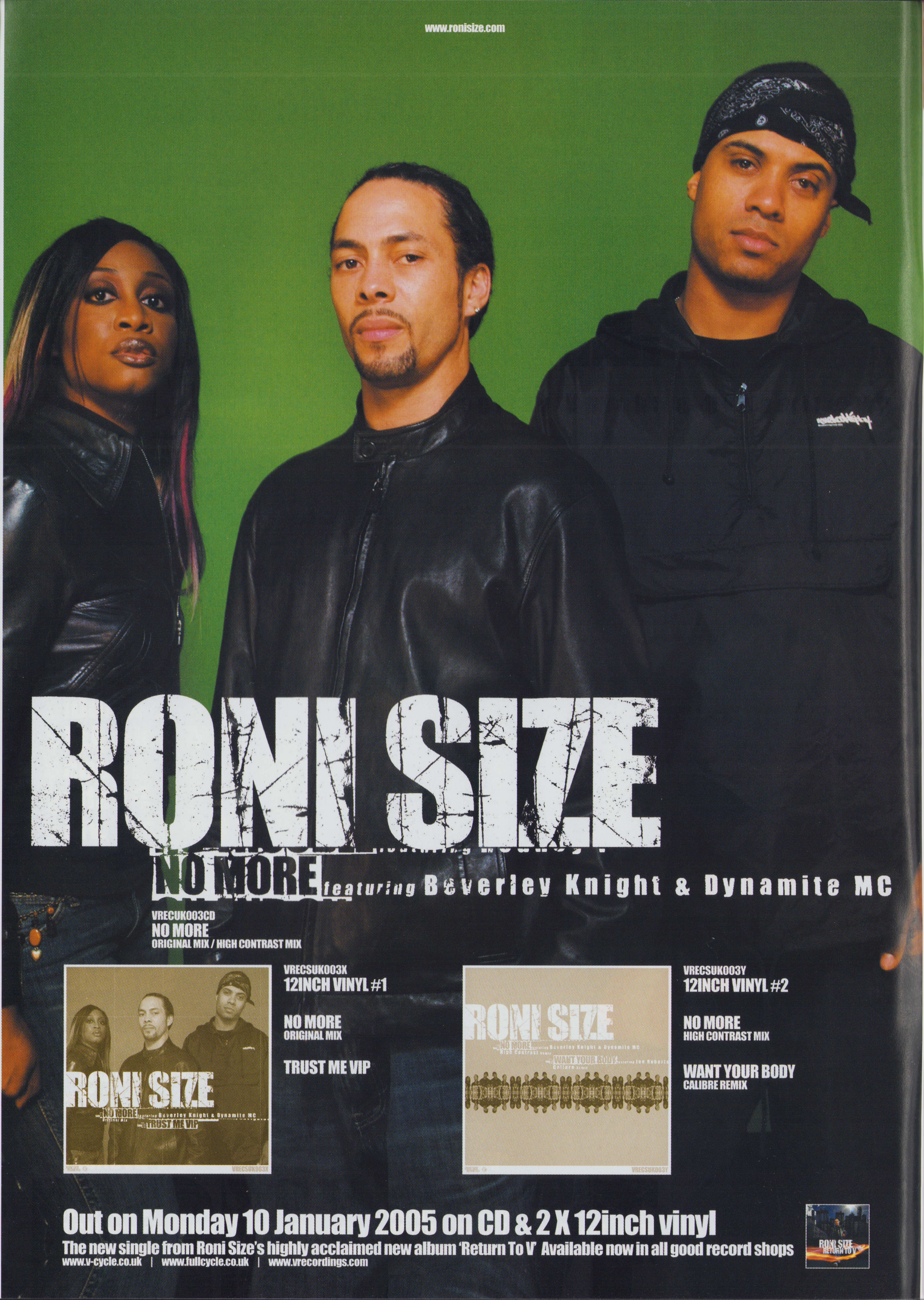
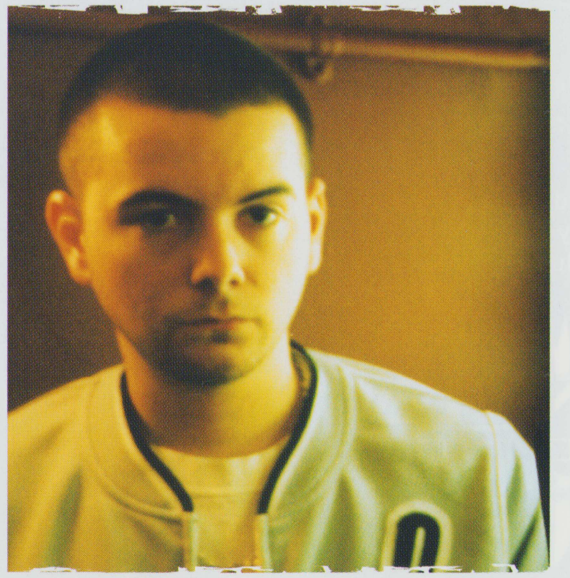


the word on the street

SOUL:SIGN

Waiting for the latest from the soul:bruvaz of middle-England? Missed SOULR013? Well, they got a bit for everyone from everyone right about now. So, with the recent release of Marcus Intalex' Detroit / Hacienda homage, 'Zumbar' / 'Temperance' (015) - the first solo 12" from Marcus in years - be sure there's more coming soon from him, incuding the A-list rotated 'Afrikaa'. Soul:R 16 comes courtesy of Calibre with 'Hypnotise' / 'Water Carrier'… which brings us to his collaboration with High Contrast, 'Mr Majestik' b/w 'The Other Side' forthcoming on the affiliated Signature imprint. Calibre also has his first release ('Bluetop' / 'Gemini') for Marky & XRS' Innerground due in December and he's donated 'Can't Stop the Fire' to Bassbin Records' 'Rare Grooves' album, set for release in January 2005. He's also on remix duties for Roni Size's 'Want Your Body' (Return To V) and Silent Witness & Break's 'Dialing Out' on Critical both reaching the streets next year. Talking of remixes… MIST has been called in to rework Alex Phounti's 'Another Way' (feat. Xantone Blacq) for Sweden-based Funk Of Fury Recordings, also droppin' double-zero 5. More on the release front later but take it from us; you need to watch out for some serious projects coming from this camp next year. In the meantime, get yourselves down to one of their Soul:ution jams in Manchester or London. Randall's doing Manchester on December 17th and their next Plastic People gig is pencilled in for Spring '05 so keep 'em peeled. Alternatively… or in addition… tune in… no… log in to Marcus Intalex' new monthly 2 hour radio show. It's fresh… so fresh in fact, that it isn't even up'n'runnin' yet, but once it is, da Intalex sets are being broadcast worldwide and archived on the Soul:R site www.soulr.co.uk. As for that missing SOULR013 cat… well it's a limited edition T-shirt - you best be quick - they're on the streets and when we say limited, we mean limited - get on the hunt now or you might already be too late.



V AFFILIATES

V's all about the circumference… covering all angles of D&B, with V, Liquid V, Philly Blunt and Chronic, you can do no wrong in the record shops. At the beginning of December expect an energetic EP release from Ghost & Surge via the Chronic moniker. This EP features new artist, Ghost, 'longside Chronic regular, Surge, delivering tracks in the shape of 'Missdirection', 'Glangler', 'Square Wave' and 'Movin On'. And there's more from the chronicles of Chronic in January with the 'Rasta Luv' EP from London's Most Wanted feat. Ray Keith. On here you'll find 'Rasta Luv', 'Sensi', 'Wobbler' and 'No Drama'. Elsewhere on Planet V; with Roni Size's album well'n'truly out'n'about Liquid V's next installment is the 12" 'China Blue' b/w 'True To The Craft' due out in December courtesy of D Bridge.

G DUB

The Geordie artist(s) formerly known as Generation Dub are now to be known only as G Dub, reflecting a focus on their own label, Propaganda Recordings. The label's first EP is due soon courtesy of the Taxman. Following that is a single with a G Dub remix of Taxman's 'The Rebate' (main tune on the EP) b/w 'Evasion' then 'Transmission' b/w 'Rawhide' also from G Dub. Their second EP in the pipeline, 'Cold War', will include work from the Geordies themselves, Taxman and others. All bookings can be made through the Amplified Artist Agency.

GRID

Next up on Grid is Zen's 'Kebab Knife' followed by Atomic Supermen by Rob Sparx, the 'Hung, Drawn & Quartered' EP Vol.2 featuring XRS, SS, Twisted Individual and Heist, and the Remix EP Vol.2 with reworks from DJ Kane, Zen, Crystal Clear and Generation Dub. Label boss, Twisted, had very busy time in the studio too. Keep your eyes peeled and ears open for his remixes of 'Russian Roulette' by DJ SS, Generation Dub's 'Puppet Master', Heist's 'Bollie' and 'Wot's My Name' by Killa Kella & Rookwood. Mr. Individual has been working on an album as well - tracks pencilled in so far include 'Swan Cake' and 'Five Knuckle Shuffle' plus a few bits as yet untitled. Also look out for 'Finger of Fun' from Dirty Fingers on Zombie.

HOSPITAL

Firstly, following on from 'Together', the oh-so-on-fire Logistics is due to release his debut EP, 'Spacejam', at the beginning of December. On there you'll find the massive high-demand title track 'longside 'Kaleidoscope', 'In My Soul' and a tougher VIP of 'Together' no less. One to keep 'em peeled for over the festive period is Hospital's annual mix CD namely (so you don't miss it), Hospital Mix 4, being laid down by Cyantific on CD for y'all. This will come complete with hot licks from High Contrast, Nu:Tone, Logistics, the Cyantific guys and more. Expect exclusive tracks 'longside fresh joints forthcoming in double-zero-5 from London's NHS camp. In other news… if you're feeling the idea of Hospitality as your drum&bass tipple for New Year's then celebrate with them (an NHS NYE first) at their regular haunt, Herbal, in Shoreditch, London. DJs seeing you through to 2005 include London Elektricity, Nu:Tone, Cyantific, Logistics, Tomahawk, plus Stamina MC and MC Wrec. For info and tickets click www.hospitalrecords.com.

BASIC OPERATIONS

As the year rolls over look out for forthcoming Basic Operations music on Total Science's Advanced and CIA imprints, an Innerground 12", Blindside and Rehab singles, three separate Renegade Recordings releases including an appearance on the Rollers EP, a 12" to themselves, 'Soundkillah' b/w 'Bring Love', plus their own Renegade EP, not to mention additional collaboration work with Holdtight, Mathematics, Evol Intent and Mason. Future projects as yet unconfirmed include potential work for Commercial Suicide and for Photek's TEKDBZ. Basic operations also put in an appearance on LTJ Bukem's latest Progression Sessions CD. Busy busy.

DEFCOM

The Anglian contingent keeping things bubblin' with Leon Switch & Kryptic Minds' latest offering, 'Deep In the Eyes' b/w 'Turf War', which sees a December release. And it's only a matter of time before Defcom's album project hits the streets. The as-yet-untitled LP, coming on three piece vinyl and CD format, will include tracks from Leon Switch & Kryptic Minds, Teebee, Technical Itch, Dylan, John B & more. Currently, there's no confirmed date for this but be sure when it drops it comes accompanied by a tour. Check defcomrecords.co.uk for more info.

DJ FRESH

DJ Fresh is currently putting together a mix CD called 'Bass Invaderz' for Dieselboy's Human tag but this one will be exclusive to those of you State-side of the pond. The highly anticipated and continuously unconfirmed is now confirmed and… still anticipated - 'All That Jazz' is, at last, scheduled for early next year and comes complete with a Darrison vocal to boot. Fresh challenges Baron in the studio for Breakbeat Kaos' next release, 'Supernature'. Preparation is the order for next year's Breakbeat Kaos mix series and, of course, the soon-to-be-astronomically-hyped album project dropping courtesy of Pendulum - the clock is ticking - the metronome is clicking. Watch this space.

CONCORD DAWN

In between their worldwide touring duties, New Zealand's flagship D&B outfit, Concord Dawn, are keeping tings fine n'dandy from the land of flightless fruit with more signings, both artists and releases, for their uprising Uprising Recordings label. Adhering to a local and worldwide combi, they've recruited Pacific (NZ), Rawthang, Psidream & Mecha, Infiltrata, Kiko and Rob F, who should all be seeing light of wax in the very near future.

CHARGE

If you've been thinking the Charge camp has been quiet of late it's only because they've been preparing for on onslaught from the end of this year into the 05. December sees the first with their collective EP, 'Rainman', complete with title track, a 'Jaws' Remix, and Blame's hefty 'Focus'. Blame follows in EP fashion come February with 'Rise Of The Machines' and a month later you can expect a full album project to hit the shelves. As we know thus far this includes a Gridlock remix of 'Trippin' plus nuff stuff from Blame and Mampi Swift himself. Watch this space for more information or tap in to chargerecordings.com

ARCHITECTURE

Architecture's freshest B-Boy Breaks engineers hail straight outta Canada - Stranjah & Gremlinz head up a December 12" - 'Breach b/w the charmingly entitled 'Diapor Rash'. Label bossman, DJ Ink, will be presenting the latest mix CD from their 'Future Shot' range, 'Future Shot Vol.4' delivering D&B smashers from the industry's finest. Oh, and The 4 Horsemen are increasing from 4 to… more (including Stranjah & Gremlinz)! Now they'll simply be known as 'Horsemen', creating scope for recruits as and when they're ready. Expect Horsemen releases on Architecture and Karma in the near future.

HIGHLY BLESSED

Keep 'em peeled for Highly Blessed Recordings' new signing, Dubsta, with their latest release entitled 'Champion Riddem' and 'Coca Cola Bottle'. Also look out for Shabba D & MC Yardie's 'Badness On Da Streets', Cowboy Ranger's 'We Got

MC VERSE

'Longside nuff emcee circuit work and prestigious radio appearances, it's been a busy year for Mr. Verse; as both a producer and vocalist he's had releases on Renegade Hardware, Outbreak, Sanctuary with DKay and Refuge Audio with Keaton, plus scheduled releases on Karma Recs, Architecture and BC Recordings. The serious news, however, is the birth of his very own label, Crunch Recordings. 001 features the man himself again with Austrian b-boy, DKay, for a track entitled 'Off The Rails'. On the flip is a Verse solo outing, 'Azur Eyes'. We suggest you keep a close eye on this man - things are sure to escalate. Do a search for some of his live work on DOA.

TEEBEE

Norway's Aurora Borealis, Subtitles, is firing on all cylinders; recently, now, and over the coming months. Teebee has locked in Break as a firm member of the camp with his forthcoming 'Locked Out' / 'Diffusion' on Subtitles 39. 40 sees a new face in drum&bass called… er… Phace with two slices of niceness; 'Brainwave' b/w 'Polymer'. After that they got Chris SU back with 'Solaris', a track that's been doing damage worldwide, followed by an EP from Noisia that includes the in-demand 'Monster'. Release 43 sees another addition to the camp - none other than the mighty Commix - debuting with his 'Midas Touch'. Rumour hath it there'll be a double CD released around the years' transition and the first Photek Vs. Teebee 12" 'Mercury' b/w 'Fake ID' will be touching down on Photek Productions very soon. Teebee also informs us there will be a remix album, some big collaborations and I quote, "overall sickness", in the New Year.

SINGING FATS

After the huge success of 'Drop It Down', the irrepressible MC Fats is currently compiling material for an album forthcoming on True Playaz. The collaborators he has both pencilled and inked in include Andy C, Potential Badboy and J Majik, plus Calibre, A-Sides, Blueskin and Hype with whom he's produced fantastic work before, so you know this is gonna be one serious project. To gauge its magnitude, the LP, cunningly entitled 'Matter Of Fats', is set to drop in the latter part of next year. Also forthcoming from Fats on Playaz look out for a 'Certain Sound' and 'Bring That' 'longside production stalwart, A-Sides. Fats and A-Sides have also got 'Don't You Worry' soon to drop with Cleveland Watkiss. And in keeping with the Fats / Cleveland Watkiss combi keep 'em peeled for 'Feel You Too' and 'Hold The Moment' by Blueskin. Not to mention the massive multi-MC 'One Love' track with DJ Ron & Patife. In the pipeline and somewhere down the track, in addition to getting videos together, Fats is lining up 'Drum&Bass For Lovers' in 2006. On this he has not yet embellished, but watch this space, as and when he's ready to reveal more, be sure you'll hear it here first.

EZ ROLLERS

Moving Shadow's budget CD series continues with a full E-Z Rollers representation - fans should be happy about this - all their tracks mixed by them! Currently they've got a couple of remixes floating about on Shadow - 'Dust' (E-Z rollers remix) b/w 'Rhyme and Punishment' (Distorted Minds remix) taken from their 'Titles Of The Unexpected' album and in Febuary they're releasing a mix CD of their 'New Skool Blazers' series on Intercom, featuring twenty tracks by new artists. Keep your eyes open for the series' final single from Belgium's DJ System D. There'll also be work from Tommy Knocker and Lickable Beats vinyl very soon. Those of you that dabble in the studio should check the E-Z Rollers sample CD for Reason and ESX24, available through Time & Space at the beginning of next year.

BREAKBEAT KAOS

BBK's first compilation album, 'Junglesound', was a resounding success, as was their Summertime anthem, 'Sun Goes Down', which rocketed to number one in the UK D&B chart, and number three in the UK sales chart. There's no sign of slowing with the latest release from their hot new signing, Baron, accompanied by the efferfreshent DJ Fresh. This soon-to-be-released 12" supports 'Supernature', the Baron & Fresh collab b/w 'Shakedown' from Baron going solo. The picture disc version will have a different flipside - 'Farenheit' - also a Baron lone effort. We doubt you'll need reminding but the Pendulum album project is bubbling away. BBK and Pendulum are keeping this close to their chest, and rightly so - all we can give you is the working title, 'In The Fire', but it's early days. If you're holding your breath, it'll be worth it. Let's just say, soon come!

L DOUBLE & FLEX

2004 means Flex has been flexing for a whole decade now. How time flies! To celebrate this milestone, Flex is releasing a retrospective mix CD showcasing the past ten years. The CD, simply entitled 'Ten Years Of Flex' highlights some of Flex's finest moments to date, with tracks from L Double, Marcus Intalex, Andy C and ST Files including Da Intalex' 'What Ya Gonna Do', 'Little Rollers Vol.1' and 'Dubplate Special' by the main man, L Double, himself, through to Andy C's unreleased remix of L Double's 'Break It Down'. With his weekly Connexions show on BBC 1Xtra the man in the mix for this one is none other than Mr. L Double. On the upfront front Flex have their 'Ten Years Of Flex V1.0' and 'V2.0' EPs in shops now. Come Christmas check for an exclusive mix CD stocking filler featuring L Double & The Jungle Drummer.

Da Hype' and MC Junior Dangerous' 'Yes Yes Y'all' coming soon. They're currently working on The Highly Blessed Album featuring, Shabba D, Cowboy Ranger, Yardie, Junior Dangerous, Fearless, IC3, Fun, Skibadee and more. Watch this space for more info.

SINUOUS

Propaganda, the freshest act to hail from the camp of Sinuous, is the combination of React & Buckley, a duo rising outta Southampton with that techno infused drum&bass sound now synonymous with Sinuous. Watch out for their forthcoming release, 'Gunrunner' b/w 'Life Like', in the near future.

D-KAY

Illskillz, the Austrian based label, has a team-up'n'a half etched in for December. Illskillz frontman, DKay is joined by Soul:R head honcho, Marcus Intalex for their dirty funk fuelled 'Transition' combi, b/w 'The Beat' by the Illskillz duo, DKay & Rawfull. Now, we know you're getting excited about Christmas… Well, DKay is donning a Santa suit to deliver his very own imprint, 'Brigand Music', creating an outlet for diversity. And he ain't playing; 'The Martians Pt.2: The Revenge' is scheduled for Brigand Music's first release. DKay is also working on a track for Jenna G's forthcoming album, currently being put together by DJ Zinc.

DEFUNKED

Continuing on from their Soulful Behaviour 2 release (which included a mix by ATM's DJ Frenzic) the latest Defunked offering comes in the shape of a 12" by the Australia-originating now Bristol-dwelling Davide Carbone 'longside Kubiks with 'Totally Distracted' featuring Clari b/w 'Let It Roll'.

INVADER

Invader Recordings are back with a Winter release schedule reading as follows; Muffler's 'Dark Future' gets remix treatment from Chris SU whilst Helsinki's Muffler delivers a fresh slice on the flip himself with 'Closer'. Next up it's Kaleb with 'Grunt' & 'Havoc' followed by Audio & Damage's 'Subatomic' b/w 'First Strike'. They've also got a double CD forthcoming in 2005 - one disc is to be mixed by Muffler, featuring old and new Invader material; the other will feature complete tracks for those CD DJs out there!

BRAND:NU

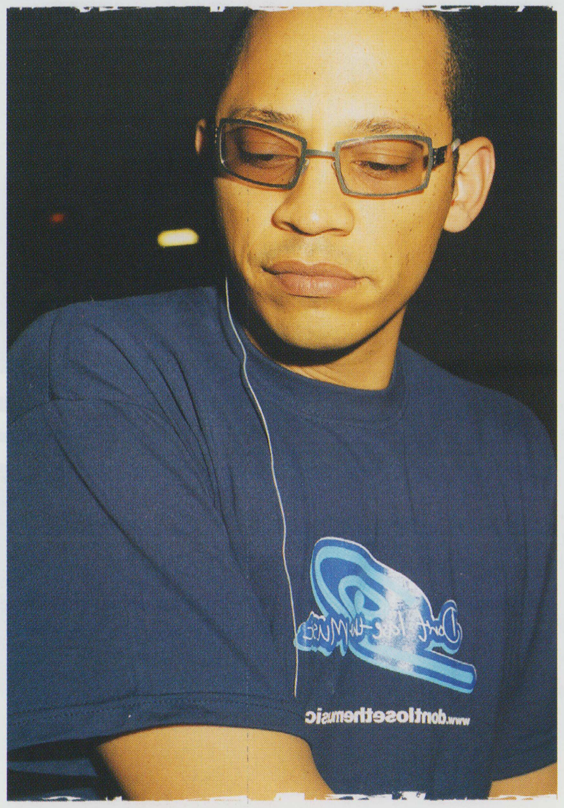
Brand.Nu's latest release should be in your shops now. It features Cambridge stalwarts Commix and Logistics with 'Surround' and 'Deep Joy' respectively. Next in line, Brand.Nu looks to Europe for the fifth release, with a 12" featuring tracks from two of Germany's hottest new talents. Young Ax comes with 'January' while the flipside sees Syncopix take on a dub vibe with 'Fade Away'. Keep your eyes on both production outfits 'cause European tings are hotting up in 2005.

TKO

After hard hitting releases such as 'Rolf Harris' on J Majik's Infrared plus the 'Circles VIP Remix' & 'Therapy' alongside Adam F featured on the Breakbeat Kaos Junglesound LP, TKO have set up two labels, K-O-Phonic Recordings & Abstract Inc. The first release on Abstract should be hitting shops about now with a hypnotic tech trance rollout, namely 'Alien Nation' b/w the dark Reese led 'Ogo'. The K-O-Phonic website is under construction but is due to go live about now too.

WHEN YOU CAN'T HEAR THE JANGLES NO MORE...

I guess it was only a matter of time before someone took this matter by the balls and started to jingle 'em, hard, with the intention of ringing alarm bells for many - just as it's only a matter of time before you might not be able to hear those alarm bells ringing at all - let's hope you'll still be aware someone's jinglin' your balls! Which would you choose to lose? Just as you don't wanna lose your balls, and girls; just as you don't wanna lose your mans' balls, you don't wanna lose your hearing, believe! Many a DJ/producer out there has recognised this potentially soul crushing issue - you may notice your favourite jocks walking 'round a club or rave with something(s) in their ear(s) - earplugs! So, this is one of those mañana matters - I am guilty of the mañana syndrome myself, as is many a DJ, producer and clubber I'm sure - "I'll get some earplugs tomorrow" etc, etc. One DJ/producer who hasn't sat on this issue is LTJ Bukem, who's made it his business to educate and specialise. And he'll inform you of one seriously scary matter - "every time your ears ring after a night out clubbing you're likely to have damaged your hearing. Most of the time the ringing in your ears (tinnitus) will have disappeared by the next day, but don't be fooled into thinking that just because the noise has gone, everything returns to normal." Any noise-induced hearing loss will not come back - that's it, gone! Repeated exposure to loud volumes increases the risk. The RNID (Royal National Institute for the Deaf) are promoting awareness to clubbers, venue owners, DJs and producers alike with their 'Don't Lose The Music' campaign. Venues are being encouraged to display volume levels and safe listening times in addition to making hearing protection widely available. Conventional earplugs and cotton wool affect clarity and creates distortion - effectively simulating what it would be like if/when your hearing is damaged. But Advanced Communication Solutions Ltd (ACS), the leading manufacturer and supplier of hearing protection products, provide a range of plugs to fit all ears and pockets, including products allowing you to hear at every frequency across the musical spectrum, simply at reduced volume. LTJ Bukem has sported the ER15s for some time and is now working alongside ACS to develop an In-Ear Monitoring system designed specifically for DJs. Bukem says "My in ear system allows me to monitor at a much lower volume, which protects my hearing and lets me achieve clearer signal reproduction than with conventional headphones. It's a real breakthrough and something I would urge all DJ's who value their hearing to consider." For more information visit www.dontlosethemusic.com / www.hearingprotection.co.uk (.)



SONIC

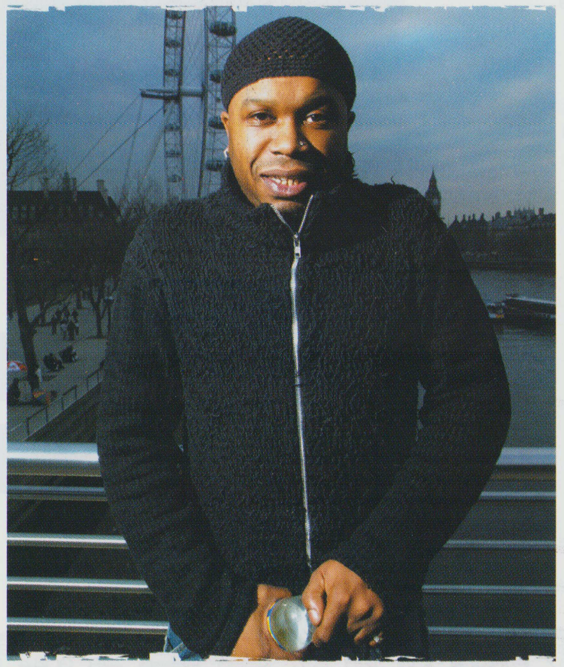
The latest developments fresh in from South-East Asia, straight outta Nam, come courtesy of Uncle Travelling Sonic. First and foremost is the news of his forthcoming debut album on Space, entitled 'Spaced Out Vol.1'. On the label's 12" front he's got 'Sunshine' b/w 'Freedom' followed by 'Ten Ton Dub' & 'Funk U' out soon. You'll find a Sonic contribution on the Hospitality LP and a solo 12" release on BC Authorised in the near future too. After spending time in Perth, Australia, obviously inspired by that 'special something' (perhaps in the water) that brought you Pendulum, Greg Packer, ShockOne, etc, Sonic and Shimon put a combined effort into their essential touring Powerbooks for a forthcoming release on Frequency. Talking of touring, you'll be able to check Sonic somewhere in Asia and Europe early next year.

DOGS ON ACID UNDER CONSTRUCTION

After the success of the internationally renowned website's first, and seminal, release, 'Floodlight' b/w 'Tombraider', it's easy to understand why DOA have struggled finding anything to follow suit. They have, however, decided to commemorate the debut release by preparing a limited run of the same, but with a twist. As you're reading this there's a good chance you're missing any one of the two thousand (and yes, that is limited), silver and gold picture discs n your local record store. Check the DOA site exclusives section to get in quick. DOA Records is intended to be a prominent label for high profile releases - as such it is A&R'd by the fastidious Grooverider - however, to ensure a flow of music, DOA have decided to launch a sister label, duly entitled, 'Under Construction', which plans to do exactly that - publish/showcase artists and/or music from the entire spectrum effectively in their/its fledging stages whom/which ultimately earn stripes for a DogsOnAcid Recrords release. Under Construction's first release is, however, setting a high standard, dropping courtesy of Future Prophecies in the shape of 'Thunder & Lightning' b/w 'Deceived'.

FORMATION AFFILIATES

Leicester born and bred, Formation label manager, Sonic Boom promoter, up and coming producer and DJ, APB is building foundations to become quite a name in the D&B public eye. His debut solo release, 'Sing It With Me', features on the 'Straight Outta Leicester' LP and his own mix, also entitled 'Straight Outta Leicester' on CD through Reformed, both in your shops ask we speak. Also look out for his 'Halloween2' remix coming on Dope Ammo early next year, plus bits on New ID and a Formation collaboration. Which brings us to Formation, when January next year sees the release of Generation Dub's 'Sexy Beast' EP, whilst Valentine's Day breathes the first breath of air into Influx UK's forthcoming album; a breath of air in the shape of a '2 Million & Rising' album sampler featuring MC Fats. After that Powerplay is set to return... and number four includes DJ SS, APB & Twisted Individual (that collab we mentioned), Zen, Crystal Clear, Nero and S.M.O.K.E. Back to Reformed and we see a return of Crystal Clear with 'Vandalise' MC Code:Breaker (of Grand Theft Auto fame) b/w 'Mr. Wolf' due in December. Following that it's Zen with 'Monster Munch' b/w 'T-Rex' and finally, thus far, Splitting Atoms, AKA Total Science, graces Reformed with 'Rug Munchers' and 'Red Roy'.



INNERACTIVE

As we go outta that into this year-wise, Spirit's Inneractive marks the winter of 2004 with a release from Hungary-based Tactile who deliver 'Catapult' b/w a combined effort alongside fellow countrymen Mindscape for 'Dormant'. Into 2005 keep your eyes peeled for Cujo's second release on the label. This 12" comes with 'Shapeshifter' & 'Time Traveller'. As the year progresses you can expect to see releases from Heist, Tango & Ratty, plus a debut from Hak (USA), while Outrage remixes Amit's 'The Tube'. Of even more note is the debut album from Spirit set to drop in the spring. A twelve track CD is set for April plus four 12" vinyl releases over April into May, beginning with 'Demons'. Dates for a worldwide tour are being sorted as we speak and if you're in the States look out for him through December in Atlanta, Raleigh, Vermont, Boston, Washington DC, San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles and New York.

BLACK SUN EMPIRE

The Netherlands-based Black Sun Empire music collective have just launched their brand new label, Obsessions, with the intention of providing some future fuelled funk for y'all. Obsessions' first release has a host of names thrown in to hit hard - the German combination of X-Plorer & Dee-Pulse come with 'Sahara' whilst BSE themselves remix Synthetix' 'Cryogenic'. They maintain the pace for the following release with Noisia, Mayhem & Pacific's 'Centepod' b/w 'Stranded' from Kemal & BSE.

SUDDEN DEF

Switzerland hailing Task Horizon, also signed to DSC14, is the latest signing to Sudden Def, and has the most recent release out on the label. Next year you'll witness Task Horizon back in effect along with Skynet and K-Step also set for releases, plus an as yet undisclosed heavyweight remixer we're told. Moving into merchandise now and soon you'll be able to acquire yourself a phat Sudden Def branded record bag - check the website, suddendef.com (,) for more details. It's also worth checking respected mp3 download online stores, trackitdown.net and imodownload.com (,) for high quality mp3 files of the label's first ten singles.

CRITICAL

As the Critical camp sets to drop its fourteenth release from Breakage ('Staggered Dub' / '4Me') their forthcoming release schedule builds from strength to strength - Alias makes a return with the 12", 'Van Cleef' b/w 'Can I' out early next year, whilst SKC & Bratwa, Young Ax and Calibre are locked in for the very near future.

A SIDES

Essex soldier A Sides has just returned from a tour of the Far East alongside long time spar MC Fats. Touching down in cities such as Yamanashi, Tokyo & Osaka to educate the crowds and spread their drum 'n bass vibes. The main aim of the tour was to record a live CD at Club Spiral in Tokyo. This set was broken into 2 parts, the first being a regular DJ set, then the recording of a special 1 hour mix featuring only East Side releases, old and new, from artists such as Break, A Sides, Calibre, MC Fats, DX & Yoneda and Skeptic. The CD, which should be available in stores early in the New Year along with more fresh releases

Collection 2005

UDG HeadphoneBag

The HeadphoneBag is a small size bag that holds any foldable headphone. It also fits a FinalScratch unit (model 1.5). The bag comes with a shoulder strap. It also has the possibility to be attached to the following UDG bags: SlingBag, SlingBag Trolley, FlipFront Bag, Slanted Bag, SoftBag Large, SoftBag Small and CourierBag Deluxe.

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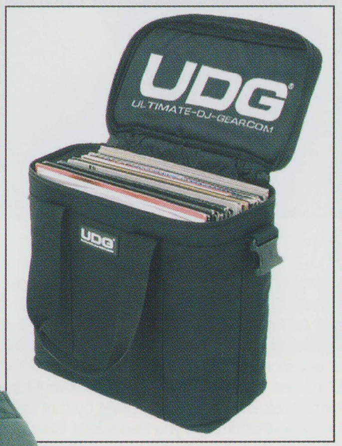
UDG StarterBag

50x12"

The StarterBag is a medium size bag that holds approximately 50 vinyl records. It's the perfect budget priced padded DJ bag and a perfect chance for every DJ to have an original UDG product. It comes with a shoulder strap and two hold-all straps that make it easy to carry.



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JU JU

Juju's been a busy man of late and here's why. First up on the release tip he's been given remix duty for the CIA (LTD) with his rework of Total Science's 'Murder Thing' b/w their remix of Hive & Echo's 'Elysian Park'… out in December… as is Juju's next release 'Zombies' and 'New Day' followed by 'Cool Down' b/w 'Resting Place' out January, both on Phuturo. They also have him remixing - in January Phuturo sees Juju's take on 'Goa' complete with the original by Electrosoul System. Well into 2005 now and Juju's prolific discography reads on, with his joint, 'Burning', on Soul:R's 'Dubwise' EP. Finally (for the moment that is), the Cartel combi of Juju & Craze challenge Beatnuts for a sound off rework of 'Nuts & Bass'. Check it when it hits in January.

BAND AGAINST THE WALL.. FOR NOW

This coming New Year's Eve marks a curtain closing of one of the oldest and most seminal music venues in the UK. Band On The Wall, standing proud in Manchester's northern Quarter for over 200 years, has been a prominent music venue in its current recognisable form since the early '70's. Jazz was the way back then before an ensuing punk era staked its claim, then, in the '80's it was refurbished and BOTW cemented its name in history hosting live shows including The Cult, Ian Brodie, Prince Far-I, Nico, The Fall and a young Bjork so we're told. The intimate venue (holding 250 people max.) started leaning towards reggae in recent years with the likes of Luv Dub and loosely, Eyes Down. More to the point however, BOTW became home to Soul:R & Signature Records' monthly Soul:ution drum&bass night for the past two years. Anyone who knows will tell you "in any one week at Band On The Wall you could have seen Jazzanova, Roy Ayers and Calibre, that was the beauty of the place". The club also ran Inner City music workshops and outreach programmes making this a genuine music hub. The Manchester music Mecca is now closing for maybe two years in order to receive a long overdue refurbishment. The consensus is that it will leave a gaping hole in the North's music scene. Redevelopment will increase the capacity in the main venue and provide additional club spaces 'longside a developed education facility, due for completion by 2007. in January 2005 however, Soul:ution starts it's new monthly residency at Manchester's Roadhouse.

FUTURE PROPHECIES

Hot on it at the moment, Future Prophecies have been spending a lot of time rearranging and changing the style, not just building their D&B repertoire but dabbling in hip-hop and R&B as well. Moreover they're preparing to launch their new label, Beserk - we'll keep you posted there. However, the date is already set for their fresh live band session - 5th March 2005. This is coming complete with a video of the session featuring Svein Schultz on bass, Carl Oluf Wennerberg on drums, and David Solheim engineering the sound, all delivered digitally form their computers to your ear. Everything's gonna be done live; that's amens, Reese, everything, and we're told it's some "heavy, dark, hard hitting shit." They tell us rehearsals are starting soon. On the D&B production tip, they've just finished a track for DJSS to be released on his World Of Drum&Bass album in 2005 and they've got 'Thunder & Lightning' b/w 'Deceived' launching DOA's second imprint, Under Construction. Furthermore, there's a Moving Shadow EP ready to drop early next year with tracks 'Concrete Combat', 'The Dawn', '417' and 'Final Fantasy'. They're also getting in the studio with MC Darrison and MC Jamalski for a vocal version of 'Dreadlock'. Nice! If you're in Japan though February or the US in March (including the Miami WMC) you can check them as they tour.

JENNA G

With the help of DJ Zinc, the delightful Jenna G, now pursuing her own project separate from the Future Cut affiliation you're used to, is currently in full swing pulling together her own vocal D&B project to be released on Bingo in Spring 2005. 'Lost In Music', the beautiful single she produced with TC1 & Stress Level, which featured on ATM's last cover CD by A.I., will most likely be released on V, well, Liquid V we presume, but she's done more work with that duo, entitled 'You', which will appear on the as yet untitled Bingo LP. Here's a sneak preview of the tracks she's laid and locked so far, and check this for one serious line-up of featuring artists – 'Silent Wonder' from D Bridge, 'Ooo' with music by Total Science, D-Kay and 'Woe', 'Heavy' courtesy of Logistics, Kabuki's Pleasure Ride', A-Sides with 'Cry Solitaire', 'Quick Love' by Nu:Tone, 'Rising' with Artificial Intelligence (although this is a working title and might be changed), a couple of untitled numbers with both Friction and Shy FX, plus of course the label frontman himself, Mr. Zinc, who's worked with Jenna on 'Call Me' and 'Back Where I Belong'. Jenna feels indebted to Daddy Zinc and seems completely humbled by the response to this project. You know the results are gonna be electrifying. The album is coming together in various ways, be it loops sent by the producers or live sessions, either way it's all about Jenna's sublime voice. So far she's performed three of these tracks live, plus 'Kiss Chase' which you'll find on Total Science's Good Game LP. However, I think it's a given that, in the coming months, you'll be seeing a lot more of Jenna on stage. It's only a matter of time before the album is toured. Between now and then you can check her playing D&B, soul… everything, on Radio 1Xtra every Saturday afternoon between 12pm and 2pm or, if you're in Austria on 11th December, she'll be live at Wicked in Vienna. More drum&bass for lovers y'all.

from East Side. Upcoming on East Side you can expect the likes of 'Distinction / People of Tomorrow' from A Sides & Calibre, 'Rat Race / Heat' from A Sides, and 'Soul Classic / Crack Head' from Uncle 22. The man himself has been making quite a splash himself of late with releases such as 'Exodus' on Valve, 'Bring Dat' and 'Certain Sound' on True Playaz, and 'Separation' feat. Jenna G due on Bingo. Never quite on the DJing front you can see the man live all over the place in the coming weeks, the latter part of '04 is spent touring the states, while the early part of '05 you can catch him in Barcelona and London respectively.

SOLID VINYL

With this year coming to an end and the birth of a new, Solid Vinyl are marking the turn with a release from the HardStepSistaz first lady, DJ Dhanu. For the A she brings us 'Foxy 2 Tails' whilst the flip, 'E-Legal Gunshot' comes courtesy of Mr Quest featuring the Ragga Twins. Check www.hardstepsistaz.com for more news from the female D&B contingent's main dedicated site, plus links to wha gwaan Solid Vinyl-wise.

DIRECT RECORDINGS

Coming straight outta Scotland, Morphy drops his debut for Direct Recordings. 'Bottoms up / Junglist Choice' will hit your shops soon. Check www.directrecordings.com for artist profiles, audio, online shop featuring back cat & exclusive promos.

CHASE & STATUS

Chase & Status have been very busy of late with releases for Hardware's sister label Barcode, and a 12" for Subtitles due soon. Early '05 see's 'Iron Fist' and 'Zulu King' drop on BC Presents. On a different tip, liquid ripper, 'Loves Theme' and 'Wise Up rmx' are set for Zinc's Bingo imprint. There's also 'Hood Rat' for U.S. based Habit which has been getting good support.

DN AUDIO

News just in to ATM Towers tells us that 2005 sees DNAudio's first EP featuring 'Block' and 'Close 2 Zero' by Silent Witness & Break. The second slice of wax includes VIP collaborations with two drum&bass heavyweights, namely Klute, who joins forces with Silent Witness on 'Cow Poke', and the mighty Fierce who teams up with Break once again, following on from 'Foodchain' on Fierce's Quarantine and their 'Melody Madness' remix on Randall's Mac II. After the EP Break goes solo for 'The Myth' b/w his own 'Breathless' remix. This release is pencilled in for late April.

JERONA FRUITS

'Landslide', the fruits of Perth-based duo Greg Packer and MC Assassin's labour is available in shops now backed with 'Sabre' by High Fibre, whilst the next release on Jerona Fruits will be Croydon-hailing Andy Skope's 'Jah Jah Man' b/w 'My Own Sun' by FX909 from tricolore's side of the Channel. Jerona Fruits live twelve-piece D&B band Diablo Nuffness recently played their debut gig with live performances of Greg Packer's 'Landslide', Do The Math's 'Seeing is Believing' and a few of their own numbers plus a special ska song, 'Date Rape' By Sublime. Forthcoming gigs are currently being arranged, including Tempo Tantrum's first night in 2005 and a night at Cargo possibly. Jerona Fruits have admittedly "jumped on the Mp3 bandwagon"

TOV CAMP

As ever the TOV camp's bombardiers drop the bombs on their bountiful array of label sisters. The flagship imprint drops 'Volume 12' of the unstoppable 'Here Comes Trouble' EP series in early December with tracks from Holdtight, Cybin, Spor, Lynx & Fatal. You can expect more Spor and Cybin stuff on TOV in the near future, plus Final Reckoning, Probe & Sylo also with 12"s in the pipeline. 'Fast Lane 2', the album, follows the above, hitting shelves on vinyl and in the shape of a CD mixed by Friction. Tracks on the album come from Baron, Distorted Minds, Brockie & Ed Solo, Spor, Zen, Simon Bassline Smith & ESP aka DJ Phantasy plus Friction himself. Renegade Hardware is ten years old next year. We're told you should expect a special LP project 'longside a worldwide tour from the camp's crusaders! On a sooner note, after their naughty 'Paranoia Part.2' EP, the Hardware moniker's first release of 2005 is 'Hardware Chronicles Part.4'. On here you'll find the awesome debut from Unknown Error, namely 'Shadows' and take it from us, this is quite an unveiling. The EP also features three tracks from Skitty, Spor & Bulletproof. Following that there'll be some heavy EPs from Evol Intent, Manifest, Spor & Loxy & Ink. After dropping the critically acclaimed 'Renegade's Of Funk Vol. 3' Renegade Recordings come with 'Renegade Rollers Vol.5', 'Sound Killah' & 'Bring Love' from Basic Operations', a 12" from the infamous Holdtight boys plus a couple of remixes from the The Insiders in the not too distant future. Last but by no means least, it's Barcode – the 'Rowdy Time' EP is due in December featuring Raiden's '44 Calibre Killer', Spor's 'Three Ravens', 'Horns & Halos' by Evol Intent, plus the Chase & Status title track 'Rowdy Time'. Following up you can expect Psidream & Mechwarrior's 'Stitches' b/w 'Last Walk' plus releases from Spor, Ewun, Evol Intent, Vicious Circle and Raiden.

THE BOOK OF COOL

When this package turned up in the orifice I was kinda sceptical about its title claim and intrigued to find out if it did exactly what it said on the box – 'The Book Of Cool' – OK! Well, if the box is anything to go by then it's not a bad start I guess. Here we got the entire school of cool in a neat little package. This is a book/DVD combination with nothing but cool shit goin' on in it and on it. There are moves in here that blew us at the ATM office away. The people these guys found to film and educate are masters of their chosen field, be it skating, blading, yo-yoing, scooter or street bike tricks, card tricks, magic, pool shots, gun tricks… er… hmm… ropes & whips… eh… ropes & whips? Yep! The list goes on. The street basketball is just one of many eye-opening extracts. Then there's breakdancing that'll send Greg Packer packing, casino skills that'll give Ed Rush a head rush, golf tricks that'll make Frenzic think twice about his unironed Pringles and I tell you what, the football extracts are pretty damn special, believe me. Apparently Ronaldhino learns a lot from watching skill technicians on the Internet! I dunno where Mampi Swift learns his moves but these guys will leave him colder than Mount Fuji. Especially Mr Woo (not Eddie), the world freestyle football record holder executing with a football like Andy does behind the decks – not like he does on the football pitch however – we can't be perfect at everything y'know – genii are supposed to have their flaws and this DVD/book pack suggests as much – "from over 250 skills and tricks, you choose what you want to master." If you master 'em all and can prove it… and mix like Andy and/or Swift, then they'll give you their entire record collections on sight.

BREAKIN A BASSBIN

December sees a remix 12" from Breakage featuring 'So Mars' b/w 'Bring Back Remix' whilst Fracture & Neptune debut on the Breakin imprint with 'Continuities' / 'Untightled'. In January you can expect their first album, 'Rare Grooves', spread over two double packs, plus a mix CD featuring the eight album tracks, future releases and some back catalogue. Pack One comes with Skitty's 'Sweet Vibrations', a Calibre track to be confirmed, 'Bongolia' from Paradox and Alias', 'Long Time'. Pack Two sees Equinox' 'Don't Wanna', 'Rise' by Breakage, 'Lucky' from Digital and 'Everyman' courtesy of Seba & Lenk ft. Robert Manos.

LOCKDOWN

Lockdown are stepping up and into the New Year with a whole load lined up for release over the coming months. First up, from the Cybin duo, is 'Dubwise' b/w 'Dogbite Remix' on 12", closely followed by an EP including tracks from new signings Mesh & Construct plus another number from Cybin in the shape of 'New Walk' and Intaface's exclusive 'Nightwalker Remix'. The ensuing barrage includes another 12" from Cybin and then the big one, also from the guys themselves; an album with tracks and track titles as yet to be confirmed, but we can tell you this is due to drop around May next year and the album will contain exclusive tunes from Cybin featuring MC IC3. There's potential plans for some of their unreleased material turning up on a Cybin mix CD, perhaps with IC3 on the mic to boot, so keep your eyes and ears well 'n truly open. You'll also be able to check the website, due to be up and running some time soon at www.lockdownrecordings.co.uk. There's also www.lowdownmanagement.com worth checking for their artists too.

DJ RON

DJ Ron's been active in the studio, recently remixing the massive '94 anthem, 'Champion DJ', featuring Top Cat forthcoming on Rebel MC's Congo Natty label. On a more general tip, Ron's pushing new artists on his own labels DNA and, as material takes shape, the coming year promises to be a good one. Talking of one, one you've gotta know about is 'One Love' dropping courtesy of DJ Ron and Brazil's Patife, plus eleven of the drum&bass scene's leading emcees; Deman Rockers, Det, Flinty Badman, Skibadee, Dynamite MC, Cleveland Watkiss, 5ive-0, Shabba D, Stamina MC, GQ and the singing Fats. There's expected to be remixes of this so keep 'em peeled.

joining forces with www.strictly-digital.com to bring you drum&bass, old and new, at a healthy price. 99p per download! The site, run by Nookie is working against the obvious problem that is illegal downloading to help keep the scene alive. To borrow a Downsyde phrase, "buy it, don't burn it". Same goes for the naughty D/L – those that steal, you're killing all of us! Also check US based site www.digidisco.com for their music sold in the US dollar currency.

PHUNKFICTION

New label from Germany, Phunkfictioon are set to release their first 12's next spring. AJC take the honours on the first release, following this expect treats from tyhe likes of Syncopix, Stare, and more. Check www.phunkfiction.com for more info.

HARD:EDGED

Long established German imprint, have been doing well on the club front of late. Their Hospitality Berlin nights are now to be bi-monthly and they are also penning regular Metalheadz nights at their Watergate venue. The are currently working on the mix-cd project entitled 'Watergate Files Vol 1', the series of these mixes will feature artists that have played at the club since it's inception in 1992. Metro is taking care of the first one with tracks from the likes of D Kay & Lee, Drumagick, Mathmatics, TC1 & Stress Level, Kabuki, X-Plorer & Dee-Pulse and more. This will be accompanied by 12" releases of tracks such as D Kay & Lee's "One Nation", Drumagick's "Timetogetup", Arquer & Realtime's "Warehouse Daze" etc.

RESPECT

Junglist Platoon in Los Angeles (one of the founding fathers of the west coast drum & bass movement - have just celebrated their ten-year anniversary - their world-renowned club RESPECT continues to be L.A.'s longest running d&b weekly. Check it: www.respectdrumandbass.com

BASSBIN

Ireland's mighty Bassbin are finally gonna drop the 'So Mars / Bring Back remix 12" in December. There's also the debut twelve from Fracture and Neptune on the Breakin imprint with 'Continuities and Untightled'. In Jan there's the first album for the camp 'Rare Grooves', spread over two double packs with a mixed cd feat the 8 tracks and future releases and back cat. The vinyl will feature the following tracks Skitty 'Sweet Vibrations', Calibre 'TBC', Paradox 'Bongolia', Alias 'Long Time', Equinox 'Dont Wanna', Breakage 'Rise', Digital 'Lucky', Seba & Lenk ft Robert Manos 'Everyman'.

JOHN B

Never one to relax! John B has recently put his touch to the new Freestylers track "Boom Blast" for Supercharged, also the classic 'Theme from S'Express' and apparently they love it, there will also be a bunch of electro mixes done for the latter, but rerst assured John has done a D&B mix. for more info on the man check www.betarecordings.com

MONKEY & LARGE

Due soon on Monkey & Large's co-own label (with Rawthang) Coded,, is Monkey & Large ft. MC Stirlin "Ruff Ridin Sound", and "Driftin". They have just signed "Raise" / "Motion" to Tekdbz under their System Noise moniker, expect these and a few remixes in the pipeline.

pics: Ella Cooper
words: Jo Sharff

ATM ISSUE 62 COVER CD

NU:TONE & SP:MC

"I'm a studio whore". Well that's the technical term that Nu.Tone uses to describe himself at the moment. "Yeah, I'm pretty much locked in here right now!" The DJ otherwise known as Dan Gresham explains that until he has his eagerly anticipated album completed he's going nowhere except the hospital - not the big building with patients, but the office of the label; Hospital Recordings. However, with the album in its last stages, it looks as though Dan's struggle with freedom is nearly over: "We're very nearly there. I'm just wrapping it up and it's really quite exciting."

t is going to be released in February/March next year and it will definitely be one to watch out for. It is the usual mix of some solo projects, collaborations and guest vocalists. But this, of course is normally a recipe for success. He's got some things on there that you would suspect, such as tracks with both Logistics and London Elektricty - the big ones. But then, there is a little diversity in there: "I've done a tune with Rose Windross who was one of the original Soul II Soul vocalists and also a couple of tracks with a girl called Natalie Williams, who is a wicked jazz singer from London." So there is clearly some "girl's dnb" on there, but Nu.Tone explains that an album needs variety: "I'd like to think that the album is quite diverse in that there is some solid dancefloor instrumental stuff and that ranges all the way to some song based vocal tracks."

House music has been a particular influence for many of the new breed of the more soulful sounding producers out there. Dan is no exception and with the big soul singers on the album is this somewhat of a house inspired album? "The house thing does have a big influence on me in general but I don't have time to explore house and drum and bass, certainly not full on anyway" says Dan: "House is something that I love doing though, it is very different and it tends to inspire me when I come back to drum 'n' bass after a few days or whatever." So is it a house album? "None of the songs on the album are diva-esque but they are all funky".

So while finishing off his album Mr Gresham is a bit like a lab rat, not getting let out much, running around all the time, probably not getting fed all that well! I just hope this doesn't carry on when he is married. Dan may have a bit of a baby face but he is tying the knot in the summer of next year. But, you know things won't slow down: "Things will definitely get more and more hectic in the run up to it. It has worked out quite nicely timing wise because I am getting married in the summer and the album is out in February so hopefully most of the touring will be out of the way" explains Dan: "Although I don't foresee a slow down. After I am married there's all the more reason to work hard" Amen to that. Its pretty obvious too, that it might be rather favourable to get out of the hospital office, where Dan is living right now. "We only got hot water recently, which was a nice touch. It took me a week after it had been installed to realize we had water!" Maybe you shouldn't be admitting that one Dan!

Nu.Tone is a DJ and producer with a lot going on right now. Along with all the wedding plans and writing an album he is certainly on the world map for DJing now, having just returned from an Australian tour with MC Wrec: "Well the weather was shit but they were great gigs!" He is also working on a track for Jenna G's incredibly long awaited solo album, which will also be out next year: "Its looking very cool, it is a wicked vocal that she has recorded and the track sounds very nice." On top of that Dan is also keeping busy with his label Brand.Nu. It seems to be doing fairly well and he has number six lined up: "I can't tell you what it is though. It is going to involve Commix but to what extent I can't tell you!"

Well, it seems fairly certain that Nu.Tone is on top of it all with no intentions of slowing down whatsoever. He will keep the releases going for 2005 but he is simple and humble in his explanation: "People give me so much music and there is so much of it that I am really into that it is so nice to be able to push people forward that I believe in."

Nu.Tone has still found the time to do an absolutely cracking mix for the front cover CD of ATM this month. It is the best selection of tunes on a free CD that I have ever seen. It is quite usual for front cover CDs to be, in all honesty a pile of poo, with tunes on it that no one is particularly that interested in but we are getting ahead of the game here at ATM. "After the AI mix last issue I had to pull the stops out!" says Dan. Check them out.

ATM ISSUE 62: COVER CD TRACKLISTING

01. Influx UK
Shine - Formation
"One of the best tunes about at the moment. I've been starting all my sets with this."

02. Nu:Tone feat SP MC
Heaven sent - Hospital
"The Mighty SP on vocals here, showing his sensitive side. Some deeper styles from my new album."

03. Syncopix
Fade Away - Brand.Nu
"Wicked tune I've signed for Brand.Nu. Its dubby, deep, nice."

04. Logistics
Spacejam - Hospital
"A tough track from Matt. Every bit the anthem."

05. High Contrast
Angels & Fly (album Instrumental) - Hospital
"Wicked groove on this - some unorthodox NERD styles from the massive High Society LP - nice instrumental to give SP space to do his thing".

06. Breakage
Out Of Reach - Bassbin
"One of my favourites from Breakage, really clever beat programing, heavy sub, its just a cheeky roller."

07. Commix
5 Reasons - Dub
"Bad new tune from Commix, slightly moody, something a bit different from them."

08. Roni Size
Strictly Social (Nu:Tone remix) - Liquid V
"This came about through something that me and Commix were planning with Bryan G and this came out the box. Whatever happened it worked!"

09. D-Bridge
Scrabble - Exit
"Wicked tune of Darren's' that I've been playing for a while. Chunky on a techy tip!"

10. Nu:Tone
3 Bags Full - Hospital
"My first single from the new album. Its kind of seventies ba ba ba ba vocals, with cheeky beats."

11. Calibre
Can't Stop This Fire - Bassbin
"Wicked wicked tune from Dom, got a real dubby reggae feel to it, wicked vocal just classic Calibre."

12. Marky & XRS
Butterfly - Innerground
"This is another wicked little soul sample used to great effect."

13. Crescent
Right Now - Renegade Recordings
"A little sneaky hands in the air soulful anthem."

14. A-Sides and Calibre
People of Tomorrow - Eastside???
"Another wicked collaboration. Beautiful pads and a heavy organ bassline."

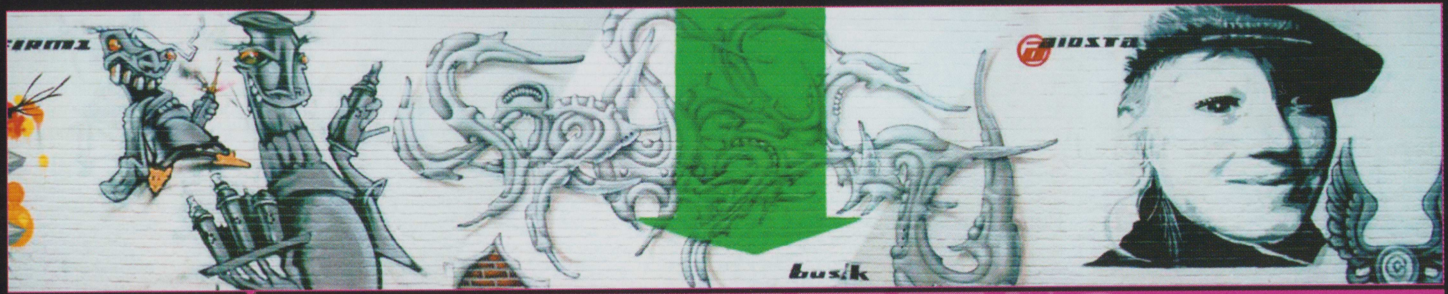
15. D Kay & Mat
Uncovered Funk - Dub
"Love this tune! By DKay and Mat (one half of Vienna promotions outfit TrifeLife). Dkay showing his versatility with some stabby jungle funk - forthcoming on his own label".

WORKIN CLASS HEROES

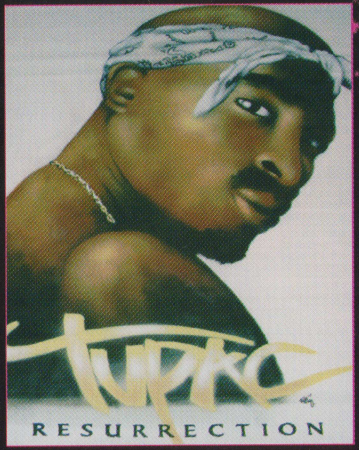
For this months installment of **WORKIN CLASS HEROES**, ATM dialled 118-118 and got through to the line manned by the notorious **MR BUSK**, trust me he don't fuck around when it comes to spreading butter ability. Three Decade's deep in the game, **BUSK** has clocked up some hefty international mileage, hooked up with some of the best plus runs with the They Made Me Do It and Signal Project collectives and to top it off founded a bunch of notorious pioneers from the UK that you just might have heard of called **THIRD DECADE**.

The styles he paints are so diverse and have been perfected over years, He paints Organic, Mechanic, 2D, 3D and also characters plus taken part in large graffiti jams up and down this country. More recently **BUSK** has been transforming his work on to canvas and taken part in several exhibitions in London with the '***they made me do it collective***'. Alongside that he just completed work on large scale mural in Kilburn London alongside **SNUG**, **TIZER**, **BLEACH** and **DANE** with '***signal project***'. Far and above all the economics, his main motivation is inventive expansion as an artist and to continue to take the U.K graffiti movement to the next level, there is absolutely no room for style paralysis, so keep your eyes on the walls and your ears to the streets...

Make sure you catch us next time round where we'll be turning up the heat with even more UK damage. Anyone who wants to contribute to **WORKIN CLASS HEROES**, send your photo's to **LEE FRAMER**, Po Box 5307, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 1TW or mail me at **leeframer@hotmail.com** Peace. We **GHOST**.



FIRM1 • BUSK • FUCK1 BELGIUM 2004



BUSK TUPAC CANVAS 2004

BUSK • SKIRE LONDON 2004

BUSK CHARACTER DETAIL, NORWICH 2004

RE02 • PULSE • KIS42 • BUSK • STATE OF ART • SEIZE • SOLO ONE • NAK • RICH • CAZBEE • ETCH • CHASE OLD SCHOOL LEGENDS JAM, LONDON **2004**

BUSK FRIEGHT, BELGIUM 2004

BUSK CHELMSFORD 2002

BUSK NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL 2003

BUSK THEY MADE ME DO IT, LONDON 2004

BUSK NORWICH 2004

BUSK WHITENOISE VW WEEKENDER 2004

BUSK CARGO CLUB, LONDON 2003

BUSK KILBURN WALL DETAIL, LONDON 2004

BUSK KILBURN WALL DETAIL, LONDON 2004

BUSK KILBURN WALL DETAIL, LONDON 2004

BUSK CHELMSFORD 2002

BUSK URBAN GAMES, LONDON 2003

BUSK COLLIERS WOOD, LONDON 2002

BUSK LONDON 2002

words: **Laurant Fintoni**

SCRATCH PERVERTS

The Scratch Perverts' rise to fame has been as unusual as their world famous DJ sets. A long and chequered history has seen the DJ collective evolve over the last 7 years from unknown contestants to DJ battles world champions, from a loose collective of 8 to a strong team of 3 (Tony Vegas, Primecuts and Plus One), and has seen them become world famous club DJs with a memorable and on going residency at leading London nightclub Fabric as well as countless tours and festival appearances that generally leave people speechless and in awe as they ram through more music than you ever thought possible in 2 hours. Having hosted the European and world finals of the Allies Beatdown DJ competition for the last two years at Fabric they have ditched the battle this year for their own version and used the occasion to celebrate the release of the first single on their self titled label; a single which has been awaited more then the return of the saviour in certain circles. As such it was time for ATM to head down to Fabric and have a chat with Tony Vegas to find out what the Perverts have in store for 2005.

First up is the change of format for the Beatdown, a battle that over the last 3 years had fast become a favourite of many, no less thanks to the Perverts' work. So how did this all come about?

"We started this whole thing in good faith with the Allies, we had a good relationship with Fabric, and so we thought of using that for Beatdown. We did the first one with them, the 2002 European finals, great event, probably the best battle anyone will ever see. Last year we did the world final and that's where the problems started. First off Infamous told us Qbert would do it for free, so we ran 10,000 flyers only to find out Q had never heard about it. Then Tigerstyles wins it but doesn't get a thing, no money, no gear. It's not so much that I think we look stupid it's more that I don't want to work with stupid people. And that's what it came down to. I think that after the fall out with Infamous we knew we weren't going to put a battle on. At the end of the day I can't knock the battles and these situations as we're here because of it. But I think there's more to that music, that style of music and the performances that this music can bring then simply battling. I love the whole idea of battling but I think tonight isn't about that anymore. I think that putting Ian Brown on is probably one of the biggest hip hop ideas I've ever had. I don't care what people think Stone Roses were fucking outrageous and hip hop was always about that. And Ian Brown as a solo performer has made some amazing records, records I hold very dear. And that's a hip hop thing to me really."

And as the success of the night proved replacing the battle and bringing Ian Brown to the fabric audience was a great move. "It's almost like the strength of the line up feels like a battle to me. You've got Dillinja & Lemon D, Ed Rush & Optical, J Majik and Mampi Swift, then Ian Brown and Jazzy Jeff in another room and then Roots Manuva and Vadim in another room and you can't pick better people from each field really, so it feels almost competitive. And that's what I like about it, the idea that the competition takes place in people's decision making process when they come and look at the line up. Where are you going to go and at what time? You're going to miss something. And I love that idea and we end up with a bit of a competition in itself, so we're proud of it."

In addition to offering people the best line up the country has seen all year, the Perverts have also been busy in the studio getting ready to follow up their first single, with the promise of an EP dropping early next year in advance of the album. An EP that will be "very different and deliberately so. There's going to be rappy stuff on there but we are also going on some angles with it that the first single didn't really show. It's important to get your first record out, and we're happy with it, but the second one will be outrageous."

As mentioned these releases have been a very long time coming, with numerous rumours over the last few years of a single dropping. Keeping fans waiting might not be the way everyone wants to go about it, but as far as the Perverts are concerned it was always more a question of doing it right than rushing it out. Tony readily admits that the wait may have cost them a few fans along the way, but has also most probably gained them some more, in many parts thanks to their ever-busy DJ schedule. As he puts it "you've got the problem of releasing an album [quickly] but there being no audience to listen to it!"

So how's the studio work been for them? "We're getting better at making music, and I think that's the thing we challenge ourselves with the most. We're really challenging ourselves in how we make music at the moment. We want to make really good records that you're really happy with. And we're hoping to have a live show we can take on the road to back the releases up. That would be amazing and it's one of the main things we keep in mind when we make music. We're going to be a band basically. We got a great singer, guy called Mik from Newcastle, amazing bass player we've worked with, some great musicians and the idea is to make a music which is incredibly dynamic live because there aren't too many bands like that around anymore. A band I always find inspiration in is Roni Size's. As a band they're amazing and the sound on stage is huge, but then Roni makes big records. To me it always felt like it was a band, the drum sounds were incredible and that's what we want to do in a way. We'll all have our role to play on stage, we'll have turns, drummers, play synths and that stuff live and in front of it will be people more talented than us to be honest. We'll maybe have Dynamite on there too."

Working as a collective on music is something that people always do differently, no matter the numbers. As a trio the Perverts have worked together for years on DJ routines and club sets, but how have they managed to transfer that experience to the studio? "I think the trick is to work individually to start with. And I think that's in our instinct and nature anyway. We were all individual battle DJs, and I work at home on music and so do the others. And Prime wants to play me something that'll blow me away, and I want to play Plus One something that'll blow him away and he wants to play Primecuts something that'll blow him away, so the cycle takes place until it stops and one of those ideas is a really good one. We really come together when it comes to the mixdown and things. We bring ideas to each others' ideas in conversations but any idea has to be started individually. But we found it's quite good to work that way though. The one thing being that we all really enjoy it."

Another thing the Perverts have become famous for is their incorporation of dnb into their sets in a way that has become very much their own (alongside partners in crime the Mixologists). Their love for the music translates into their sets and how they appropriate the genre in such a way that it leaves no one unmoved, even those who might not like the music in the first place. Having been so close to the dnb scene for years through their club work, the music's influence is bound to filter into their production work.

"I think out of respect for the people who make this music we're trying to let some of it work its way into our music... but it's bloody hard, because some of these people are bloody good. You're not going to find a bigger record then one made by Dillinja, or a more intricate, well produced, banging piece of music then the whole BK camp would come out with, or a more funky track then something FC or Ram would come out with, and it goes on and on. TOV, Renegade, these people make really aggressive, different sounding music. We've spoken to a couple of people about remixes which I think will happen. I went round Pendulum's house the other week and listened to a bunch of stuff they're working on and fuck that! Will I ever be as good as them? I doubt it... But you know there are people who come along sometime and take on a certain thing and that's what Pendulum have done. We haven't taken all of it, we just want to be ourselves and do something different. Take the drums and the bass out of Pendulum's music, and you'll probably still have some fairly amazing music to listen to. My main goal when it comes to their influence on us is to work with people like that, offer them a remix. That would make me a happy man. Can't compete with them though, no fucking way."

LTJ BUKEM

pics: **Ella Cooper**
words: **Laurant Fintoni**

"I'm into music that can be played in ten years' time, and the Speed reunion proved that. It proved to me that [dnb] is as fresh as it was ten years ago. I listen to stuff that is 30 years old, and knowing that dnb is becoming like that is wicked" exclaims Bukem as we speak about the recent Speed reunion at The End nightclub in London. It's hard not to agree with him when you consider the giant leaps and progressions this music has made over the last 10 years. Conducting this interview over the phone on a gloomy winter afternoon whilst driving to the airport, it's hard to not get contaminated by Bukem's enthusiasm, vibrancy and energy even though I'm not even standing in front of him. The man who has pioneered new sounds and styles for the last decade is still as barmy about this music as he was when he discovered it as a teenager. "I've been doing plenty of touring, seems like I've been on a life long tour for the last ten years. Loving the DJing as always. Still on my decks when I can, busting mixes, calling Conrad to tell him 'check this mix!!' like it was 15 years ago. Enjoying the music, all the new artists coming through, the guys at Hospital as well as the old heads like Renegade and all that."

It's been a good year for the Good Looking Organisation with popular releases such as the recent 'Golden Girl', proving its efficiency on dancefloors around the globe, Progression Sessions volume 10 (Live in Germany) and Earth volume 7 DVD which features Surround Sound 5.1, something which Bukem readily admits "has mad potential and is such a great leap, even though I haven't had the time to check it out properly yet." All this action was rounded off with the aforementioned Back to Speed reunion at The End, which brought back a decade of dnb vibes under one roof with the likes of Bukem, Fabio, Doc Scott, Ink & Loxy at the helm. Speed started ten years ago at the Mars Bar on Charing Cross road and fast became a night of reference for the growing dnb scene spearheaded by Bukem and Fabio who would bring out new sounds and styles week in, week out. The reunion proved to be as enjoyable as the original parties as an over enthusiastic Bukem explains: "It was emotional man, proper roadblock. Best gig I've done for a long, long time. The togetherness of people there was just great. We dropped all the old school tracks and it was rammed all night, people queuing round the corner till 4am. We also had Jazzy B in there, with the Africa Center Sound System. That was also great because it's a part of my youth, and what I used to do when I was coming up. I'd go there on Sundays after being out all weekend. And just to have him come through and do his thing with us was the perfect way to complete the night. The Africa Center parties were like a church for me. They were the originators in a way of the jungle and dnb parties. I look up to these guys and having them there was just great."

Far from resting on his laurels, Bukem and GLO are gearing themselves for even more action next year with a whole slew of LPs coming our way from many of the camps' artists. These include Mokoto, Future Engineers, Nookie and maybe even Conrad, who Bukem says might be convinced to sit down and do some more work in the studio following the glowing success of 'Golden Girl'. "We've also got a new Sessions CD, new Earth DVD. We'll just keep the whole thing rolling really and probably surprise a few people along the way. We've got a UK tour at the moment too. It started a while back and it's going great, good vibes everywhere. Reception has been dope; Birmingham was rammed, with people queuing outside in freezing weather all night. We've got loads of new kids coming up with amazing productions. They've got jobs but still bang out tracks in their spare time, stuff that's really dope. There's great talent in dnb at the moment as far as I'm concerned it's a great time."

Bukem and GLO have also been busy with an important and unusual campaign alongside ACS and the Royal National Institute for the Deaf entitled 'Don't Lose the Music'. Together they are working to promote awareness of the damage loud music and sound systems can cause to your hearing over time. Something that is often spoken about but rarely acted upon by the public until it's too late (DJs are all too aware of the problems caused by powerful systems and prolonged ear abuse). The campaign is gaining momentum and Bukem's involvement stems from his long partnership with ACS (Advanced Communication Solutions) who have in the past created custom molded hearing protectors for him and other DJs as well as F1 drivers and RAF pilots. Recently though Bukem has been working with ACS on a new type of In Ear Monitoring system designed specifically for DJs and aimed at revolutionising the way DJs use monitoring systems such as headphones or booth speakers. "I've been working with them for 6 years now. I got earplugs done back then, which filter the music at different levels. It's really helped me over the years though it takes time to get used to them, especially in clubs. But it's worth it all the way. They came to us to develop a new system and I was only too happy to help them with it. This In-Ear System allows me to monitor at a much lower volume, which protects my hearing and lets me achieve clearer signal reproduction than with conventional headphones. It's a real breakthrough and something I would urge all DJ's who value their hearing to consider. Even when I play The End, which has one of the loudest systems in Europe, I can have the headphone on 1 and hear perfectly what I'm doing."

They hope to reach more members of the public with this new campaign fronting it with many a top DJ in an attempt to really awaken audiences to the dangers of prolonged ear abuse. "We're getting a whole range of hearing protection done and pushing that to the public it will include all styles of hearing aids to make it appealing for everyone, even clubbers! We'll campaign and promote it. These filters are great, they don't ruin the music and they filter in a way that makes it possible to have an enjoyable night. They don't fuck the music. We've got loads of good guys on board, Roger Sanchez, Eric Morillo, Goldie, Fabio, Laurent Garnier, and we're gonna have a launch party with everyone there using it. I'm excited about it. It'll help keep away the wrong sounds in today's clubs that really damage your ears. Not because every club is bad, but it's the way the systems are today that cause this damage and these can help a lot." So from pioneer, to mainstay of the scene, Bukem is now taking on the role of educator and promoter by helping to keep the music alive so that we all may enjoy it for years to come.

As with the other figure heads who have helped bring through new talent from across the world in recent years, Bukem is also a massive fan of dnb's global expansion and is responsible for bringing through Japanese wonder Makoto over the last year. Being constantly on the road and having a worldwide fan base has meant that Bukem has tasted this global expansion first hand, and by the looks of it can hardly contain himself when I asked what he thinks of it. "You go to some places like Hungary or Estonia and it's like your Michael Jackson or some shit! Shop signings, people bringing all their CDs and stuff, it's crazy! It's fantastic to see the music get to such places and having such an impact on people. It's so good also because it shows that it's not what the media and others made of it back in the early, mid 90s. It's there to stay more then ever. It's a genre like any other and people realise that when they go abroad and see the impact it has on audiences around the globe. As DJs today we travel more then ever and I'm always looking for people, I'm an addict for music, always been."

Compiled by: **Ben Holdtight**

When you speak to those not in the know about **drum & bass**, they often pair it up with hardcore and 'old school'; when really we all know D&B is about upfront, fresh new beats; music for a new generation. Well this section of the magazine is 100% focused on the new school and those who are leading the way with firing new riddems and vibes. This issue we have a cast of serious badbwoys in the shape of BC UK's new signing's **The Upbeats**, South Londons **Vicious Circle**, Adam F's new collaborators **TKO**, and the best thing to come out of Holland since skunk - **Noisia**. On top of that we got **S.M.O.K.E**, **Nightwalker** and **Crissy Cris**, all of which are smashing it on the dancefloor; and repping the liquid crew there's the man like **Laroque**. Check it out as these are the face that will be shaping the future of D&B as we know it...

LAROQUE

Name: Tim Carroll

Alias: 'kin ijit-…and Laroque….

Age: No way older than Bukem and younger than Tony Colman …allegedly.

Based: East sussex... I'm not a French country boy.

Biggest tunes so far?
'Goldfinger', I guess for the public. For me, the most Inspiring, moving is 'Sublime Intervention' on GLR

How long have you been producing music?
10 years and more; of all descriptions.

How did you get into music?
All my family are musical, I taught myself guitar from the age of 11 and it all progressed from there really.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why?
Production, although I love DJ'ing, production is where it all starts, …and then I push it to the floor, its more soulful for me to write, and I like to exorcise my demons through writing. DJ'ing is more of a challenge for me as I'm quite new to it, I still find it a little scary, it's nice to push your sound through playing.

What music inspires or influences you?
Anything with vibe or soul really, I listen to anything, if it moves or excites me, I try to stay open-minded, I'm involved with other types of music too.

What track would you most like to have written?
'Millenium' - Carlito remix... gets me 'here' everytime, and a thousand others, but that's one that's always in my box.

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
Ahh.. so many people I like to see play, I try and go out a lot, London Electricity, he has so much energy to convert on the decks, and the Hospital crew do it with a lot of passion... Bukem and Nookie are the technicians, too tight, scary! Marky has the party vibe, there's too many people pushing the buzz to list, everyone has their own bonuses to go see depending on your mood.

What event would you most like to play at and why?
Somewhere big where my set goes well and the crowd go mad, and enjoy themselves, there's no fights, and everyone pulls and goes home happy... see you there!

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
Me, when I'm in a bad space, works every time... playing the keyboards normally gets a tune rolling for me, get a little pattern going, and bring in the feeling, then the beats n bass and build it from there.

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
Keep it simple!

What's next for you?
I have some new stuff coming on Hospital, another 12" on Wildchild's label Wildstyle, a 12" on Fokuz in Rotterdam, Some unconfirmed releases on other majors, something undercover, working on an album of different vibes, a queue of remixes, whatever I feel like, and producing a band, and life when I get the time. Also spreading my wings DJ'ing in UK and Europe this year which has been a hoot, and maybe the US earlier next year, and hopefully the music will do the rest.

NOISIA

Name: NOISIA (which is VISION upside down) consists of Nik Roos, Thijs de Vlieger, Martijn van Sonderen

Alias: Dilate (house), Troublesome (downtempo)

Ages: Nik 21, Thijs 22, Martijn 20

Based: Groningen, Holland

Biggest tunes so far?
'Block Control' (Moving Shadow), 'Vanishing Point' (Shadowlaw) and 'Monster' (Subtitles).

How long have you been producing music?
About 4 years as Noisia, a bit longer individually.

How did you get into music?
Everyone gets into music. We got into it a bit more!

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why?
Production, we started by listening to dnb at home and on Walkmans instead of going to raves and club nights. Production came first and we only started DJ'ing when people were buying our music and wanting us to come and play, its good fun though!

What music inspires or influences you?
DnB: Ed Rush & Optical, Bad Company, Ram, C4C, Konflict, Matrix and Teebee have been (some still are) our main influences. Non-dnb: Daft Punk, Quincy Jones, Prodigy, Tipper, Miles Davis, Zero 7 and lots of hip-hop.

What track would you most like to have written?
Ed Rush & Optical 'Medicine' (Matrix remix).

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
Teebee, cause he's got skills both on the turntables as well as his tune selection.

What event would you most like to play at and why?
Hardware@ The End, cause the system is fat and the atmosphere good, "Lowlands" (big outdoor festival in Holland) cause it's something different.

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
Cubase SX.

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
Don't over-EQ and use high quality samples.

What's next for you?
We've got an EP forthcoming on Moving Shadow, which contains "Block Control", "Believe", "Cold Veins" and "Exorcism". Our first single on Subtitles is about to drop now ("Hubcap" b/w "Backdraft") and there's more to come on Teebee's imprint. Also we've been doing some collaborations lately, one with BC UK, which is called "Meditation", one with C4C Stu and Pace called "Dead Air" and watch out for all the Noisia & Phace collaborations on Subtitles, Moving Shadow and more.

leaders of the new skool

THE UPBEATS

Names: The Upbeats (Jeremy Glenn & Dylan Jones)

Alias: D.Wolf & T.Snake

Ages: 23

Based: Wellington, New Zealand

Biggest tunes so far? Spose that would have to be 'Warewolf'…. Recent thing we've done which Vegas & Maldini have signed for BC Presents. Been getting a lot of support from Andy C & Pendulum.

How long have you been producing music?
3 years seriously… started messing around with beats around 5-6 years ago… but didn't actually start finishing full tunes until the last 3 years.

How did you get into music? Was played the music by friends, and when we got our first PC, a good mate of ours gave us a "demo" copy of Fruity Loops 1.. that started us off!

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why?
We think to be fair they go hand in hand with drum and bass, dj'ing is great but wouldn't be the same if we didn't produce, and vice versa for production. But outside of drum and bass would definitely stick with production!

What music inspires or influences you?
Hmmm, drum and bass wise, we pull a lot of influence from older tunes by the likes of Stakka & Skynet & Konflict. The producers at the moment that are doing it most for us, and inspiring us would be Calyx, Pendulum & Noisia.

What track would you most like to have written?
Beyonce - 'Crazy in love'… a) because we would've been in close proximity to Beyonce, and b) because we'd be filthy rich!!!

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
Probably DJ Zinc, for being the most consistent hype dj to frequent NZ's shores.

What event would you most like to play at and why?
Dunno man, somewhere hot, with good food and surf.

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
Our super Hi-Fi Kenwood speakers. Without those puppies we'd be lost.

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
Probably that man Digital pushing us to use breaks. Did wonders for our music.

What's next for you? Got forthcoming singles on Subtronix, Hostile & Habit Recordings. Aswell as a few pieces lined up for BC Presents and BC UK's new label Defiance. Also there are a few very exciting projects we have been working on and are still working on… but that's still classified information..

VICIOUS CIRCLE

Names: Vicious Circle - Simon, Andrew, Dan and Adam

Ages: Simon 25, Andrew 22, Dan & Adam both 21

Based: South West London

Biggest tunes so far?
Our remix of Universal Projects 'Jackhammer' on Renegade Hardware.

How long have you been producing music?
Almost 3 years

How did you get into music?
We all had a common interest in music. Dan & Simon had been DJing for years and Andrew had been in a band and we had all been going raving together and getting really into the music so it seemed to be the logical 'next step' to get involved in the production side of things. So Andrew and Simon went to Music College and we set up a studio in Dan's flat at the time and it all went from there really.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why?
I think the crew would probably be split down the middle on this one! we enjoy both for different reasons and each have personal preferences so couldn't really choose between them.

What music inspires or influences you?
We have a pretty wide range of musical influences from Radiohead and Jeff Mills to Minnie Ripperton and Mobb Deep! DnB wise we all really liked the late 90's sound coming from Virus, Prototype, Bad Company etc.

What track would you most like to have written?
Tough Question! DnB track would have to be 'Metropolis' by Adam F - sounds as fresh and sinister today as it always did... and we would've liked to be responsible for 'Unfinished Sympathy' by Massive Attack too - speaks for itself.

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
John Peel because he played what he believed in and was a major influence to us all. RIP

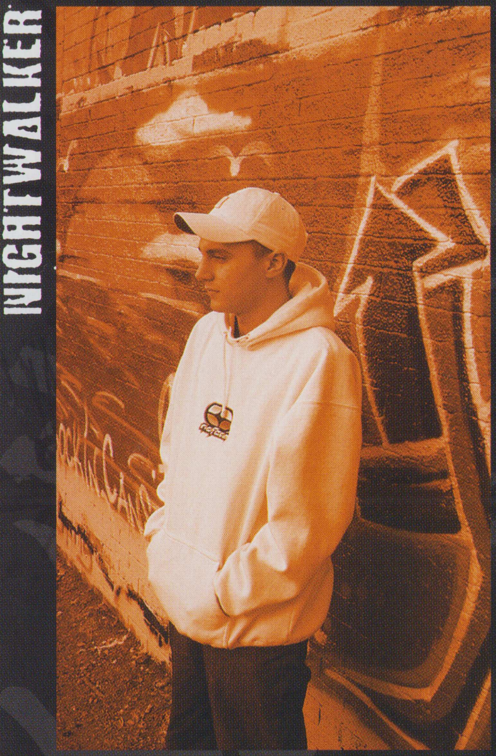
What event would you most like to play at and why?
The Skol Beats Festival in Brazil sounds pretty amazing; think we'd prefer festivals in general cos of the size of it and cos everyone's always really up for partying.

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
Mackie 32:8 mixing desk

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
Try and make sure the samples that you use are the best quality possible cos no matter what you do to them if they sound shit to start with they probably will at the end.

What's next for you?
We're doing some original material for 1210 and UP recordings as well as some collaborations lined up with Kontrol, Noisia, C4C and The Upbeats and also remixes for Baron and Kaos/Karl K/Jae Kennedy.

NIGHTWALKER



Name: Nightwalker

Alias: There's a couple of things being put out under 'The Count' but im not sure if I like it so I might use another one as well, we will see.

Age: 21

Based: In Gloucester near Bristol, UK.

Biggest tunes so far?
I'd probably say the tunes which got the most attention are 'Head Nod' on True Playaz, 'Egyptian Surprise' on Signal (which was a heavy picture disk), the release on Grid (Cheesegrater / Revival) and the earlier tunes I did with the whole 'horse gallop' swingy beats thing like 'Crazyhead' with the VIP, 'Jumpstart', 'Mayhem' etc.

How long have you been producing music?
I've been making music for about 6 years now. Three of them were when I wasnt doing a lot of the work because I was getting taught at the same time by a lady called Helen Sidey which was at a special education unit I went to when I got kicked out of school, then when I was about 18 I started writing music on my own. So really by myself I've only been making tunes for about 3 years.

How did you get into music?
It would probably when I was really little and my dad was promoting Michael Jackson, Prince and Tina Turner.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why?
It would definately have to be production because its not something anybody can do, I think the whole basis of mixing can be taught to pretty much anyone who can understand about counting bars and knowing the records, where as production can really show from what you put into it. Don't get me wrong, I like playing out but I think because every man and his dog is a drum and bass DJ these days its a bit off-putting.

What music inspires or influences you?
I cant really nail anything in specific that has influenced me or inspired me, every time I make a tune its always something different. It could be anything from a french house tune to a tv commercial.

What track would you most like to have written?
'The Beginning' by Moving Fusion

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
Hype is my favourite DJ because you never know what he is gonna play, where as most of the other DJ's selections are very predictable.

What event would you most like to play at and why?
I would most like to play at the True Playaz night at Fabric because the vibe is just wicked and the sound system is so loud and banging, in theory it should happen as I'm releasing tunes for them, but I guess only time will tell!

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
Well if I said my laptop, you'd probably be expecting to hear that seeing as these days most producers love their laptops, but all I use apart from that is my monitors, the Behringer Truth's. I wasn't convinced looking at them, but when Twisted Individual talked me into buying them and I got them, I was well impressed!

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
I got told a long time ago to not compress my drums, and recently seeing the interview on DVD in Ed Rush & Optical's newest mix cd, they say the same thing as well.

What's next for you?
At the moment im working on more stuff for True Playaz / Ganja and some remixes. Other forthcoming stuff includes 'Jupiter' on Timeless, the remix of 'Stalker' by Aphrodite (from Human Traffic) on Aphrodite Recordings, a remix of 'No More Ghosts' by Interface which on Lockdown, 'Stella Blue' on Playaz / Ganja, and some special bits which you'll find out about it due time through Nu Urban.

S.M.O.K.E.

Names: Alan McAdam, Simone Sighinolfi, Simone Deiana

Alias: Respectively Dr Nuke, Sygo, ArpXp

Ages: Respectively 20, 29, 25

Based: Sygo and Nuke are from Northern Italy, Arp is from Sardinia.

Biggest tunes so far? Our next 12" which will be 'Silver Bullet / Secret Weapon' is the biggest at the moment, been rinsed by Andy C and the guys at Ram, DJ SS all the Formation Camp and many other A class DJs. Also 'Cyclops' did well, got played by Fresh, Pendulum, SS, Twisted and many others.

How long have you been producing music?
We all started at different times, but got together producing D&B 2 years ago almost.

How did u get into music? (Nuke) My father is a acoustic guitar player / singer he has a lots of records and he loves music, I think he passed on his passion for music to me. (Sygo) I started with hip hop in the first Public Enemy era, there I got the passion for breaks. Then I played guitars in a grunge band, and there I received my passion for sonic aggression. Mixed together when I discovered D&B and started producing. (Arp) I bought a bass guitar and it pretty all started from there.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why? (Nuke) At the moment I'd choose DJ'ing because I'm still young and full of energy, and I'm into going around and meeting people /see new places, but I think in the long future I'll prefer production. (Sygo) I think I'm a producer first but I just love to play out, I think both are indispensable for a true D&B experience. Can I say both? (Arp) Production, because I like to develop my ideas.

What music inspires or influences you?
(Nuke) I think every kind of music can inspire or influence, D&B wise I'm really into Pendulum, Fresh, G-Dub and Distorted Minds. (Sygo) I love good film soundtracks, get lot of ideas from there, producers - what Nuke said plus I'll add Photek, Baron and Dillinja. (Arp) Heavy Metal.

What track would you most like to have written?
(Nuke) 'Titan'; 'Shinobi' by Fresh (Sygo) I just prefer to write my own stuff (Arp); 'Planet Dust' (Sygo again) umm, well that's a fine tune!

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
(all) Its difficult to say who is the favourite, we like DJ's with the sense of the dancefloor but with good mixing skills: Andy C, DJ SS, Shimon, Friction, Baron and so every DJ is different, being versatile is a important skill too.

What event would you most like to play at and why?
True Playaz / Breakbeat Kaos @ Fabric or Ram @ The End, hell, even WOD&B at Miami wouldn't be bad! Massive crowds, massive sound systems, massive venues.

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
(Nuke) Sound Forge, I could spend hours a day sampling records or recording sounds (Sygo) My TLAudio eq2…valve sound;) (Arp) Phatmatik Pro

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
Compare the elements of your tunes (subs, drums, vocals) with some of a record you like and try to improve 'em till they sound similar in quality. In doing so is useful to have a DJ mixer with kills so you can compare portions of audio too (only highs, mids and lows). Listen to your tunes in different speakers. Compress a bit of your bass with the drums to make it pump more in the mix. Every now and then listen the tune with the pc-monitor switched off. Some of these tips we discovered for ourselves, others were given from fellow producers. The grid in DOA is nice for studio tips too!

What's next for you? 'Silver Bullet / Secret Weapon' release on Formation, and probably a tune for the 'Power Play EP'. We are also remixing DJ SS & Gen Dub's "For Those Who Can Handle" which will be coming on Formation and then will be working on some tunes, tunes and some more tunes. We don't like to do the same track as the previous, so expect a lot of different flavours from us!

leaders of the new skool

CRISSY CRISS

Name: Crissy Criss

Alias: DFRNT (different), Crissyizzle & CPlatez

Age: 17

Based: East London, CrissyVille UK!

Biggest tunes so far?
'Playing on the Motorway' [Back2Basics], 'Fudge Packer Fed' [Mix n Blen], 'Chop & Change'

How long have you been producing music?
I have been making tunes since I was 13.

How did you get into music?
I got the love of music through my step-dad Kenny Ken.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why?
It's a hard one because I love both and I'm sure any other dj/producer does but when it comes down to it, DJing is not guarantied work every week all year round. It would have to be Production because it mostly guarantied backing from any music you produce.

What music inspires or influences you?
Every single piece of music you would hear, it has ,or probably would influence me, I get a lot of influence from Hip Hop, RnB, Soul and loads more that I love listening to, People like Roni Size and the Full Cycle lot, Kanye West, 2Pac tracks, Pendulum, Hazard, Dillinja, Cheryl Lynn to Busta Rhymes tracks to Clipz I get influences from. Even from UK Garage/Grime to Japanese music I'll be influenced to make something different to what people would hear. That's why we call it Mix 'n' Blen!

What track would you most like to have written?
Daamn.. Hard one. There's so many heavy tracks out there that have been written from all types of music like 2 Pac 'I Wonder If Heaven Got A Ghetto' to Roni Size ft Beverley Knight & Dynamite 'No More'. Soulful Music.

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
I don't really have a favourite DJ but DJ's I like listening to would be Kenny, Swift, Andy, Zinc and them kind of style DJ's because they all play styles that I like and always play things a little different, also known for the tightness' !

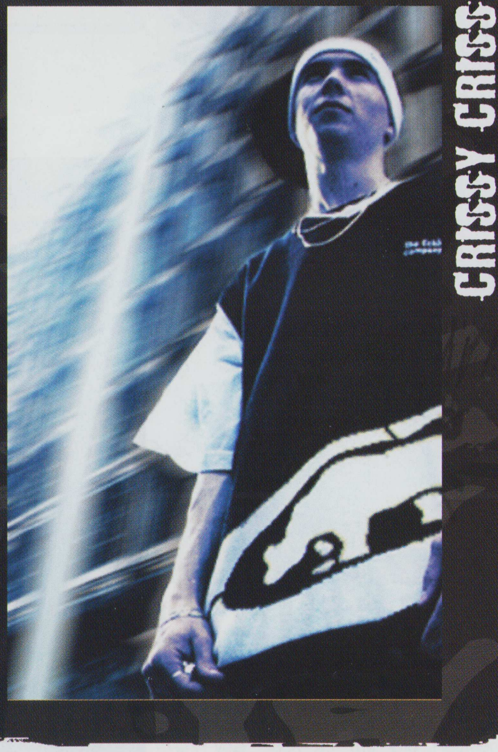
What event would you most like to play at and why?
I would like to play them huge Festivals with mad numbers of people, all for the love of just DJing for them all and hearing the noise and people going off to it all, Couldn't get a better feeling.

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
Don't have any studio equipment in my studio but Kenny keeps going about his compressors in his studio so I'd guess it would be them or the table that holds everything up including my sweets and all that.

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
Get the Beats Snappin' and phat so you can feel them first of all. Twisted Individual - Get them monitors! Kenny Ken - Turn it down because I'm going to bed.

What's next for you?
Next up is release's on Mix' n Blen' Recordings, also working with Kenny on a load of tracks and also working with my Cousin "NSD" on Drum n Bass tracks. Also a Hip-Hop Album with my boy Fumin and boundary crew. Also working on a load of Hip-Hop tracks with Skibadee, also Riddla, Shabba, Fatman D, Lethal B and a few more to add to the list. Loads more in store just keep ya ear's pealed! www.crissycriss.com

Big up Kenny & Mum, Corinne and the family, Kool Family, Boundary, Lstone (Crissyville) Newmarket Crew , Love ya all.



TKO

Names: TKO (Chris, Darren & Nick)

Alias: Shakka, Parameter II / Audio Species, Kindred

Ages: Shakka: 34, Parameter II: 25, Kindred: 28

Based: St. Neots, Cambridgeshire.

Biggest tunes so far?
'Circles rmx', 'Therapy' on Breakbeat Kaos & 'Rolf Harris' on Infrared.

How long have you been producing music?
Shakka: 10 years, Parameter II: 7 years, Kindred: 12 years; as TKO 2 years.

How did you get into music?
Shakka: I got into Drum & Bass in it's earliest form in 1989 / 90 when it was hardcore and I was raving all the time… every week and just loved the new style of music that was coming through. It was just me. PII: I grew up listening to old skool rave & hip hop. Started mixing in '93 and was producing by '97. My earliest memory of music is jumping around the living room to Adam Ant and trying to scratch with my Break Dance the movie soundtrack on a Fisher Price Record player, lol. At junior school I don't suppose my teachers were impressed with my love of NWA, Public Enemy, Run DMC, Silver Bullet, and The Criminal Mindz (T.C.M). I was always really into the backing tracks and the beats. It was at school where I was exposed to Rave and started swapping tapes with my mates. You know the ones, a copy, of a copy, of a copy, that someone had got off their "big brother". Kindred: I have always loved music for as long as I can remember. My father always listened to Motown and Jazz so I guess I was brought up listening to that. When I was about 8 years old I started playing the Violin. Around 12 I started Piano lessons. I gave up on it in my early teens, which is something I deeply regret now… but that's youth for you. I remember hearing bootleg tapes of US House and Break Dance when I was still in junior school, it was around 89 that I first heard "Rave", I was heavily into Hip Hop at the time and this new sound grabbed my attention. One of my friends was lucky enough to get a set of 1210's and I first had a go at mixing when I was about 14… after that I was hooked. Got my own 1210's at 16 and paid for my first 2 hours in a local studio that same year. It all grew from there.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or production, which would it be and why?
Shakka: Producing because without that there's no DJ's. Production is the root of the Drum & Bass scene. As a producer you have more influence on the style of music that people hear and the direction that the scene takes. PII: Production because you can creatively take it further.

Kindred: If I had to choose, it would be production hands down. I love the creative process and find it extremely rewarding. To have a concept floating round in your head and then stand on a dancefloor weeks / months later and see people dancing to your track is the biggest buzz and makes you feel privileged that you have been given the opportunities to get that music out there.

What music inspires or influences you?
Shakka: Rare Groove, Funk, Soul, Hip Hop, House, Garage and obviously Drum & Bass. PII : I still listen to all kinds, D&B, Hip Hop, Breaks, House, Old Skool, Funk, Soul. Kindred : Funk, Soul, Punk, Rock, Hip Hop, Acid Jazz, Ambient, D&B, World Music, House, Trance, Old Skool, Electro. To name a few names that have / do inspire and influence me, Pendulum, Fresh, Adam F, Goldie, Dylan, Dillinja, Dom & Roland, Technical Itch, The Distillers, Evanescence, Kirsty Hawkshaw. I listen to a wide spectrum of music, if a track is good it's good, regardless of what genre or style.

What track would you most like to have written?
Shakka: LTJ Bukem's 'Horizons' or 'Circles'. PII: Its impossible to say there's so much good music been written and so many timeless classics that I love. Kindred: 'Papua New Guinea' by The Future Sound of London.

Who's your favourite DJ and why?
Shakka: Gappa G for inspirational selections and the ability to move any crowd. PII: I don't have a favourite as such but I would have to say Andy C for mixing and selection. Kindred: that's a really hard question but I would have to say Bailey. His mixing is technically faultless and he always delivers an absolutely tearing set.

What event would you most like to play at and why?
Shakka: Valve because it's the loudest, sickest sound system I have ever heard and I would love to be able to play a set on such a beast. Hopefully it will happen soon. PII: Miami Winter Music Conference, I haven't been to America yet and it's somewhere I would love to visit. Kindred: Fantazia @ Castle Donnington 1992, DJ'ing infront of 25,000 at an event like that must have been quite an experience. But seeing as I don't have a time machine, Oz Fest. That would be a totally different experience and atmosphere.

What's your favourite piece of studio equipment?
Shakka: Apple Mac G4. PII: Emu sampler. Kindred: Atmosphere which is a Soft Synth made by Spectrasonics.

What's the best studio advice you've been given?
Shakka: Trust your ears. PII: Get all your ingredients for your track together before you start arranging as it helps you to not get stuck in a rut looking for parts, which could hold you up and stop your creative flow. Kindred: Don't work with your monitors loud over long periods. Your ear drum compresses over time to protect your hearing, so you aren't really hearing things as they are.

What's next for you?
Spending long hours in the studio and building up our labels K-O-Phonic Recordings and Abstract Inc. There are more collaborations planned for the future and we would like to start remixing. We are continuing to DJ and are pleased to hold a residency at the Breakbeat Kaos night @ Fabric. The end of Jan 2005 will see the 1st release entitled 'Alien Nation' & 'Ogo' on Abstract Inc, with 'Mitsubishi' & 'Beetle Crusher' to follow in February. Our website www.k-o-phonic.com is currently under construction and should be live January / February time. Forthcoming releases on Infrared & Black Widow.

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NARNI SHAKERS

Luckily for us, professional on-stage dancers have long been synonymous with drum&bass, and the big rave circuit is their primary platform. They add to and enhance the experience, providing visual stimulation to the aural gratification obviously essential to any dance. Ultimately a 'rave' is all about the experience, more so than simple music provision. The more senses stimulated, the greater the experience, and I for one value all (professional) elements that make up a rave. I think it's fair to say that most of you value this too. However, it seems to me professional female dancers are often misconstrued. It's a sad but true fact there are haters in the audience - I've seen it with my own eyes and, when it comes to female dancers, generally the haters tend to be female - those that like to act tough, those that feel threatened… ultimately, those that share their space with a certain green eyed monster me thinks. There's no gender-specific hating of DJs or MCs, to the contrary in fact; I will definitely go as far as to say they're idolised by both genders. As such there should be an equal respect for all entertainers that make our industry what it is, and that certainly goes for the dancers too. Maybe I've misjudged the situation or blown it out of proportion; maybe it's in the hands of the dancers themselves.

One such dance outfit has taken professionalism and dedication to another level. Without doubt the most recognised name within their profession, the Narni Shakers seem to be well above this negative stigma - their on-stage presence and professional attitude has elevated them to the top of their game. They have marketed themselves in such a way that they, the Narni Shakers, are the on-stage dancers synonymous with drum&bass. In order to gauge their vibe, get the who's who and what's what… and to avoid interviewing them as a blithering, drooling idiot, I decided to ask them a few questions over our favourite digital communication medium, the good old world wide web. Here's what they had to say.

You've been around as 'Narni Shakers' for a fair while now, what or who comprises the current Narni's?
The Narni's are the same as they have always been, a four figure, choreographed dance group. We also have a large group of 'Spare Narni's' who work with us for bigger events or when we're double booked.

Give us some background info on each one of you…
Charlotte, the original founding member, has been dancing for the past four and a half years on the rave scene and has loved drum & bass for the past 9. She has also appeared in music videos, adverts and is a budding DJ/presenter. Charlotte is the manager of the group, primary booking agent and has many responsibilities; she ensures the smooth running of every event danced at.

Kirstie is the group's choreographer, a trained dancer and gymnast. She assists Charlotte in running the group. Her skill as a dancer is a great asset. She has danced professionally for artists such as Blu Cantrell, Tyrese and Blazin Squad. She is a dynamic and sexy dancer who's hard to miss!

Janet has a vast amount of dancing experience. She began as a freestyler in the rave scene and, over the years, has progressed to learning difficult choreographed routines. Janet also danced for artists Blu Cantrell and Tyrese and is recognised for starring in many music videos. She joined Charlotte nearly two years ago when the group reformed.

Bianca is our youngest member at only twenty, dancing with us for the past year and a half. She came to the group as a freestlyer, but has progressed immensely, learning intricate choreography. Bianca regularly contributes ideas for new routines, costumes and on-stage gimmicks. Her acrobatic, slick and sexy moves style is very eye-catching.

Where did the name Narni Shakers originate from?
The name was originally given to us my Lipmaster Mark from the Ratpack. He gave it to us because of Charlotte's super speed lightning narni!!

***cough* Phew. er… who choreographs your routines?**
Kirstie is the group's principal choreographer. She trains the Narni's to ensure they have a tight on-stage presence. She teaches the group different styles - some are obviously more tongue-in-cheek than others - however, she feels it's important for them to be versatile and have a varied repertoire.

How much time do you spend practicing?
We generally practice about three hours a week, but this is dependant on what bookings we have. Sometimes we will have to meet up two or three times to ensure everything is tight and polished.

***cough again* Erm… what is your preferred musical genre to perform to?**
As a group, the Narni Shakers and drum & bass are one and the same. We have individual preferences, ranging from upfront and liquid drum&bass to R&B/hip-hop. We each bring different essences with us, whatever style we're dancing to. When the Ragga Twins are on the mic, for example, you will usually see us shaking the latest bashment moves. We can adapt ourselves to almost anything."

Who do you primarily aim you performances at?
Our performances are always aimed at the crowd, as it is the ravers who big us up and show us love. We want the crowd to remember us wherever we go!

You seem to have nailed the market… what qualities do you have that separates you from the rest?
We are an act, not just dancers; we are a recognised name and perform a show like the DJs and MCs. People know what to expect when they book the Narni Shakers; four reliable professional dancers dressed in unique matching outfits, doing choreographed routines and other madness on stage! We love what we do, have determination, work hard and give a hundred percent. It took a long time to gain the respect we have and we've worked hard for it.

Who are your primary employers?
Innovation, Best Of British, Raindance, Accelerated Culture, Heat and Fever, Creation, Sidewinder, Desire, Moondance, Curiosity events, Digital, Sweet Harmony and Instant Funk events, plus loads of one-off events. Also big events every year such as the Big Reunion Weekender, Gods Kitchen Global Gathering, Leeds and Reading festivals plus Glastonbury.

Which is your favourite event to dance at?
We always have a good time at Innovation, Raindance, Desire, Accelerated Culture, which includes Global Gathering, that's something we look forward to every year!

When working alongside DJs and MCs playing live, and they are adlibbing their sets and lyrics, respectively, how do you gear your performance?
We have a large number of routines that we practice to most styles of music, so we know which ones fit best to which tempo. Kirstie or Charlotte will stage manage the group to ensure everyone knows what they should be doing.

What DJs and MCs do you most enjoy working with?
We always enjoy working with the DJs we enjoy listening to, and who are our friends etc. MC-wise, Everson Allen, Bassman and crew, IC3, 5ive-O and the Ragga Twins work really well with us on stage. We share a mutual respect with all DJs, MCs and performers with whom we work alongside.

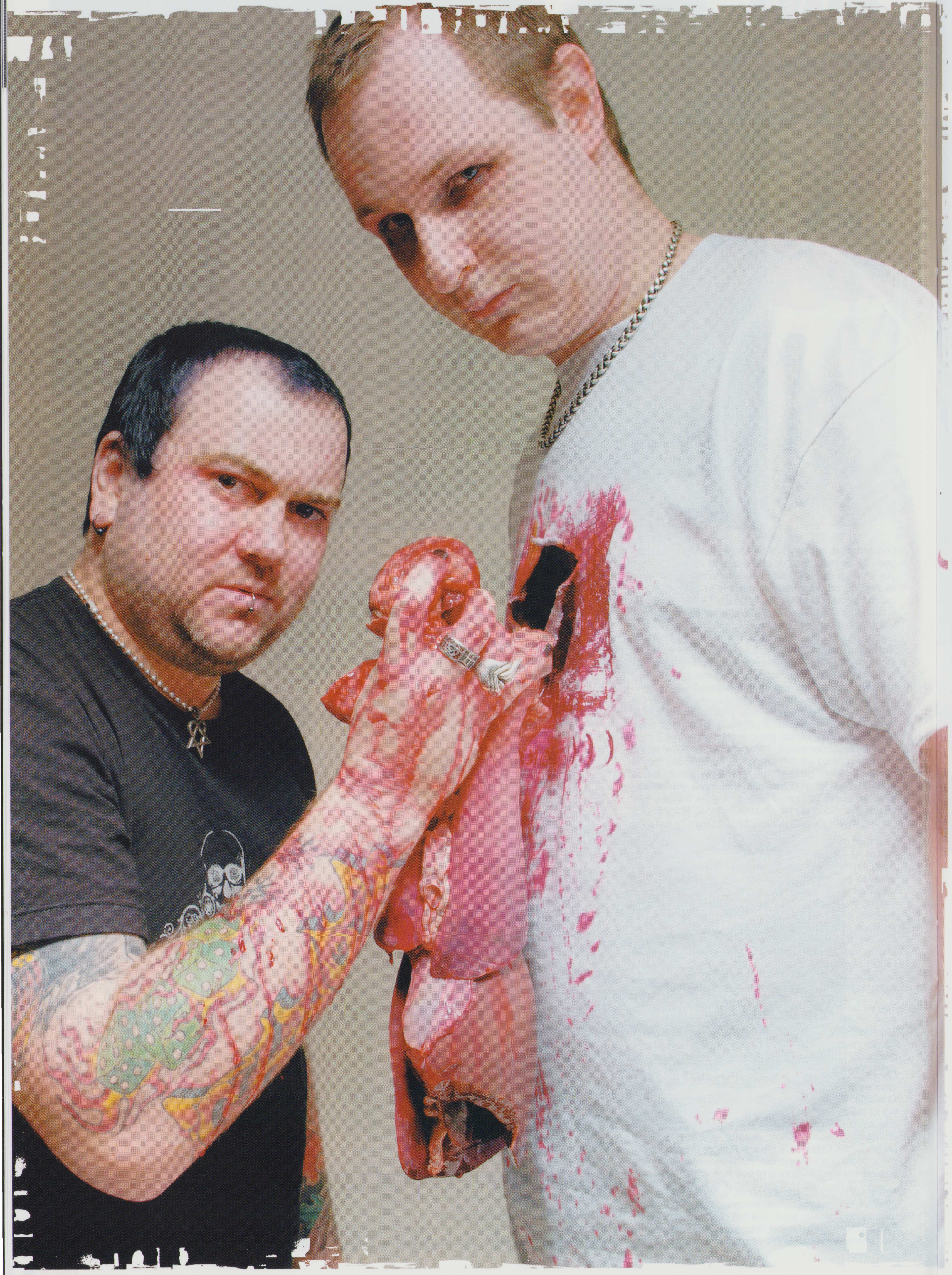
What's the deal with your outfits?
Charlotte and Kirstie make some of our outfits. Our Spare Narni's (Vicky, Lisa and Caroline) also create our costumes. They are always matching and very sexy!

Do you take advantage of the fact that sex sells?
Erm… our shows are pretty sexy and in a very male dominated scene this always goes down really well!!

How do you find the punters receive you?
Most of the time, especially in D&B and old skool, the ravers are friendly and enjoy what we do. I think they just see us as part of it all.

Is there a difference between the female and male audience with regard to their attitude towards you?
Most of the time we get love from men and women; we get people coming up to us at events saying how good they think we are, and surprisingly, it's usually women. Most of the men look at us in a different way, if you know what I mean! You do get the odd groups of women who hate but we just get on with it and don't let it bother us; we are there to do a job just like the DJs and MCs. If we do get anyone giving us attitude we just smile and carry on. At the end of the day we're just doing what we love and if anyone's got a problem with that then that's their drama!

Well there you have it, modest, dedicated and certainly professional. At least their passion resides with drum & bass. You can check out Charlotte's drum & bass radio show, 'The Narni Zone', every Thursday 3-5pm on www.invincibleradio.com. Also check out the new Narni website www.narnishakers.com and, if you can reach Croydon on 28th January 2005, look out for the Narni Shakedown party at Club one92one.



pic: Cleveland Aaron words: Neil Monteiro

DYLAN & TECH.ITCH

STORIES OF VOMIT; VAMPIRES AND TECH FREAK SOUNDS..

We caught up with Dylan and Mark Tech Itch soon after their recent tour of Australia, New Zealand and the US. The tour was in order to promote the brand new collection of tunes that form the "Destruction Ritual" album. "We were away for 2 months altogether which was the longest I think both of us have been away from home on tour" Mark informed us, and Dylan agreed "It was a long time, but cool. We flew to LA, hung out for a while, and then flew to New Zealand. We went to New Zealand, and some bullshit with visas that we sorted at 5am, which was annoying after a 13 hour flight, but was ok in the end, business class helped a lot! Would have killed someone if we had been stuck in peasant class!!" Mark told us how it was pretty mad flying to Oz from USA because you cross the dateline "So we took off on Tuesday and landed on Thursday. We fly on United Airlines a lot so we get upgraded for most international flights."

Everyone has nightmare travel stories, so I asked Dylan and Tech itch whether they had any stories to tell from this tour, or previous. Apart from the normal, delays, cancelled flights, waiting in airports, no sleep, and the fact that you naturally miss home they admit that they have to sometimes give themselves a reality check and remind themselves how lucky they are to be doing it. Dylan soon piped up "Travel nightmares... well I have one that was nasty. It was with my wife Robyn Chaos. We were flying back from Toronto after NYE last year, and got offered free vouchers to take a connecting flight via Germany, so we did it. We got onto the plane and sat down on the wrong seat by mistake. This lady said "Oh its fine" and she sat in our seats then half way throughout the flight this kid was walking down the aisle and projectile vomited all over the lady that was in our seat, I'm talking covered in puke, all over her face, clothes, it was so fuckin' smelly and disgusting and she was in our seat, ha ha!! Seriously the whole plane stunk so bad and I was just watching the poor lady trying to wipe it off, worst journey ever for her.. and it should have been us!!"

But despite all the rigmarole of travelling, on dry land they convinced me that hey had a brilliant time. "New Zealand gigs were so good, thanks to Robyn and Carina for that! Australia was fun too, but New Zealand was definitely the best... despite being on a deserted beach in winter, with no shops, or internet but with amazing scenery." Mark told us that they drove through the mountains where they filmed Lord of the Rings, and Dylan had a fight with a Kangaroo... and oral with a koala... Right.

The guys then headed back to US for 6 weeks, 20 gigs and loads more flying. US however they both agreed was wicked as always. They dressed up as vampires for the last show... It was a Halloween party so I guess that was ok! Reminiscing, Mark told us "we had to judge the contest, had a great time, big up to the St Louis crew for putting that on! LA however was killer as always; I think LA is the capital of USA Drum and Bass now, the club Respect is probably our favourite place to play. We are good friends with the promoters, and have been playing for them since they started out, so it's always a good time, and one of the best crowds anyway, mosh pit stylee. People go crazy, jumping and hitting on the speakers, like they are possessed or something. But yeah, all of USA was good, thanks again to our agent mc Kevin G from the Philli." Having loved their time there, Mark informs me that they are both going to USA in a week or so, "Dylan's wife is American and my girlfriend is doing the Xmas thing there this year." Dylan is quick to agree. "Its fun, better than the dull English style, the English need to party more. Halloween here is a joke and it's my favourite holiday, USA does it proper." Judging by the pictures I would be inclined to agree with him... but then again I couldn't think of two better guys to dress up for Halloween!

So both being already big producers in their own rights, and having successful imprints that are Freak and Tech Itch recordings, how did they get together to team up and form the label Tech Freak recordings and this indestructible team? Dylan tells me that they had been friends for years, swapping tunes, and about two years ago they had thought about doing an EP together, which then turned into an album all discussed over a barbeque at Mark Tech Itch' house, and at the end of that they decided to do a label! "We wanted a good balance of the sounds we like, and its all about people we know and get on with. So we approached everyone that we thought would compliment the album. In all styles along as it has an edge. It's not just an album of full on mash up, well... it is mostly but it really works as a full on listening LP aswell as having a hard dance floor vibe, especially the mix CD." The album features tunes from the likes of Cause 4 Concern with the much vaunted sounds of 'Mindkiller', which Mark admitted "It was good to hear something like that from them." Major scene players Bad Company, Loxy, Kryptic Minds & Leon Switch have also contributed. As if this delightful, (if that's the word for it!) package was not enough there is going to be an EP to follow called "One more nail in the coffin" and that's just like a conclusion of the album, Dylan justifies. Then to the drawing board for the start of the next one! Mark tells us that they are currently getting some remixes done of the tracks including the tongue wetting information that Photek is to remix Dylan and B-Key's 'Slave to Life', Dylan tells me with anticipation "I can't wait for that, and we're going to do 'Baltimore' in return, which we are really looking forward to doing. Going to have to dress up for that one, put the bass way up high on the keyboard!"

Apart from the album, Dylan is still excited about the release of the anthem 'Metaphor' which is in the shops as we speak. "Yeah it came out this week! Worked very hard on that 12", I just wanted to release it on my own label, as I hadn't had a release on Freak since freak002"

Mark's Tech Itch label is not quiet either "We have got some new stuff coming out, John Rolodex from Canada has his first 12" with us about to drop. Then we have a 12" from Kryptic Minds and Leon Switch coming, and Darren Decoder is working on some new bits. Penetration is now with Load Media distribution, after Alphamagic went down and there is a load of things ready to go on that front aswell." Mark himself is working with Goldie at the moment, and also a non-drum and bass project called the Morlocks which he has been working on for about 4 years now with some guys from Seattle. If that was not enough, Robyn's "Faith is Chaos LP" is in production and there may also be a Dylan and Tech Itch album.

Information about the forthcoming Goldie album, is still very much under wraps, I asked Mark to tell us what it was like to work with him... "Yeah we have been working on it for a while as and when we have had time. It's a big project as its going to be music for his new film aswell. But we have had the main chunk of it pretty much done. It's been fun working with him. We have a laugh and he's a very inspirational person. He has a lot of energy where as I'm pretty chilled, so I think that works well in the studio."

Dylan and Tech Itch have been ambassadors of drum and bass for sometime now, and have helped develop the sound of the music, aswell as pushing new artists. This is acknowledged by the fact that the music is becoming more global as accessibility to parts of the world such as US or Canada through the internet has allowed much more good music to be heard. Dylan tells us that he expected a lot of people to switch back to the harder sound. "I wish people would just stick to what they like instead of what is popular. If you are into something then fair enough, but there has been way too many people chasing the money. You wouldn't get someone like Slayer making happy music just because its popular" Bringing artists to the label such as Cartridge, Mason and D-Star, they say they would release music from any country, as long as it is good, they don't care what it is from. Dylan confirms this by telling me "We saw this thread on DOA saying "track inspired by Dylan & Loxy" so I checked it out and it was 'Rough, Rugged and Raw'. The overseas scenes are killing it right now; nearly every city has a future drum and bass hero, which is very promising." Despite listening to the tons of demos sent to him, Dylan admits that the standard at the moment is not too great, and it seems to go through phases. They can't give feedback unless they see potential, and all he would be doing all day is giving people advice. "If I hear an idea that has good potential that I'll definitely hit them up, but I get around 20 a day and to be honest 90% are not cutting it. It is great when you get a killer and have to hunt the person down." Tech Itch admits "We get a lot of crap too and don't really have the time to give much feedback unless we get something which is very close to what we are looking for. Plus I usually have a pile of CD's I need to listen to, if I get a tune through AIM I am more likely to listen to it quicker than if I got it on CD, because it's right there on my laptop and I'll just listen to it straightaway. I just found this new kid who's only 16, Russian and living in Holland, sent me some really good stuff. The net is good, the forums are good for getting feedback on tunes and letting people know about stuff coming out, web streams from clubs and radio shows! I only give tunes to DJ's through AIM now; I never send a CD in the post anymore."

Dylan could spot the CD discussion coming, which is a point of much debate in drum and bass and I guess dance music in general. "We use CD's as a dubplate alternative, dubs don't last and with CD's we have such a huge range of tunes to play. We see ourselves as DJ producers so we kinda play to the trainspotters, we like to play new shit to the people and try to educate them. So for us CD's as dubs is perfect. I know everyone has mixed opinions, and I would rather play vinyl, but I'd rather play exactly what I want to. Dubs cost a lot and then you are only cut stuff that you are definitely going to play."

So we left Dylan and Tech Itch possibly the most frank and opinionated two you could meet, and Tech Freak, the product of a beautiful friendship… pass that sick bag!! Both "Destruction Ritual LP" and the "One more nail in the coffin EP" are in your shops now.

in da lab - amit studio tips

pic: Ella Cooper

Making music that's yours!
Before you get into a studio make sure you feel you want to make music. I recommend as a rule of thumb that you have at least three influences that make you want to make a tune, no good just saying "I wanna make beats" dig deep and make sure your samples say something about you as an ARTIST!!... Firstly try and get a vibe going with the sounds you have selected and then build from there, basically if you get no vibe, don't bother, or you'll just be adding to the scrap pile of endless bland music. Try to make sure you're experimenting all the time with processes and FX, its always good to have some analogue gear as well as digital. Keep the genre of music your making at arms distance so that you don't get wrapped up with, "this is selling and that's not" or "this sounds going be big, lets jump on it."

Play your music to people who don't listen to drum n bass, so that you get a real independent opinion. Not just "yeah, that's heavy. Booh" A few years back a wise wizard said to me "Amit, just do what the hell you wanna do, I don't care if it don't work on the dance floor, just do what you wanna do" (Digital)

The rest is up to you. Here's a few hints n tips I hope they are useful...

Percussion:
Ok, percussion is my favourite part of making a tune; to me it's the heart of a tune and must be respected. When making a tune I would recommend you start with making the rhythm track first before anything else. Also stay away from break beats period, its not that I have a problem with them, as they have been instrumental in the music's progression. The thing is they have been used time and time again to death (YAWN!) and anyone picking up a break and just using it should know that on occasions 50% of the tune is written already and thus making you sound like any other producer. If you are going to use breaks try to make sure you layer them with some other percussion to create your own ORIGINAL loop....

To make your own loops start by collecting different drum hits such as kicks, snares, hi hats etc... Then the fun bit starts... look for percussion in ethnic music such as congas, tablas, taiko's etc, these sounds will put the vibe in your rhythm track, and are not to be over looked. Look for music by Bill Laswel, Mohamid Rafi and sound tracks by SD and RD Burman... These guys ROCK!!!!!

I tend to start with the soul of the beat first, i.e. the bongos, tablas etc. then layer hi hats and shakers around it, then comes the big kick and last the snare. The trick is to get the beat rolling without any of the main kicks and snares, if it sounds good without them then you know you've got something. Have a go at layering extra de tuned congas around the kick drums for extra character.

Make sure you separate your rhythm tracks i.e. track 1 - kick, track 2 - snare, track 3 - taiko etc, etc. Send all the drum sounds to 1 buss and add compression; this will have a melted cheese on bread effect and will tighten up the overall sound of your drum track.

Keep kicks and snares in the middle of the mix and pan slightly all other percussion to your own taste.

Make sure you can hear the whole of the beat at low and high levels.

Add some delay to congas and other percussion and set the BPM delay slightly off, this will give you a natural groove and not a robotic one.

To put the fear into your beats:

As beats can sound too clean, sample some noise or hiss. if you cant find any, breath into a mic, record it, compress and hi pass it... layer it with your beats and add it to the bus channel with the rest of your percussion. This will add extra character to the overall sound and is good for people who are using computer (internal) based studios. Similarly you can use any noise, so keep a look out for any so called "bad quality sound" old VHS tapes are a good source as well as old films and vinyl intro's.

Finally, record the loop and recycle it.

It's a good idea to build your own beats library, as you might want to use the beat in another tune, so keep the arrangement file and the final recording.

Lead Riffs (Resampling)
Using synths to create a lead track can be good but can also leave your riff sounding quite stationary and dull. Using a synth on its own is sometimes just not enough, I would recommend you process your track a few times to give it a unique flavour, rather than it just sounding like a preset sound.

So, record a couple of notes of a sound you like, remember this doesn't have to be the final note arrangment just a few notes so you know which direction your heading in, i.e. the vibe of the riff. Add some reverb and compression to taste... if you've got a tape delay add some and set it a little off tempo sync, not too much though, record the final output. Load your riff into recycle and cut the riff up, so that all note hits are separate, export this to your sampler on a preset. Record the notes as they were originally back into you sequencer.

Now the fun part... reverse one or two of the notes and add some more FX, use the pitch wheel to pitch certain areas of the riff dramatically, this will cause some of the delays previously recorded to go in and out of time. You can also time stretch some of the notes, and loop the very ends of each one. Finally record the loop and reverse the whole thing... you can keep doing this process till the cows come home. The trick is, the soul and tone of the riff is created by just a few notes; by using this process, it will keep the original characteristics and attain some new random off-key ones. You can apply this process to almost any sound (drums, vocals, strings etc) In my opinion anything that gets you away from presets is a good thing.

Tip: always remember to keep a copy of each arrangement. Just in case you add too many effects and wanna go back a stage.

Must Have Equiptment
I've listed a few bits of gear you should check out.

EMU E6400 ultra:- Best sampler ever made, no soft synth comes near it (£350 second hand).

Novation Super Nova:- Great synth, with FX on every channel and eight outs, not forgetting the amazing filters (£300 second hand).

Emagic Logic Audio:- Great sequencer, although the company is not, turned into a bit of a dictator with Apple ..hissssss

Motu 24io:- Amazing sound card with 24 ins and outs, enables you to do a total internal digital tune and mix it on an analogue console, so you can have the best of both worlds. (£1200)

Sennheiser HD 600:- A great set of headphones that are actually modelled on nearfield monitors. They give you a very natural sound. (£205)

There is lots of second hand analogue equipment around, at cheap prices so get your skates on.

OUT NOW: CHR027

OUT JANUARY 31ST: CHR029

OUT NOW: LQD004

OUT NOW: LQD005

OUT FEBRUARY 14TH: VRECSUK005

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NEW RELEASES
ON V RECORDS, CHRONIC & LIQUID V

Words: **Mark OD.** Pic: **Ella Cooper**

BLAME

Earlier this year Blame stood in the middle of the Milton Keynes Sanctuary amongst several thousand revelers listening to his new beats devastating the dance. At that moment it occurred to him that thirteen years earlier he'd been stood in the same place at Dreamscape hearing his 'Music Takes You' rocking the rave. Blame had come full circle and he was back on the dancefloor.

"I was back where I started," explains Conrad Shafie AKA Blame, "it was mad thinking about the whole journey and the music I went through to get back making a rave track again. When I was working on my more experimental or deeper tracks I was learning so much about music, then you make a few dancefloor things and try to get the beats and the bass smashing through the speakers in a club. Then it's a case of putting it all together, everything you've learnt, it's the final package, and you're striving for the perfect track."

Blame's journey in search of the perfect track has taken him from pioneering hardcore breakbeat, through many years producing seminal music under LTJ Bukem's Good Looking, to creating a progressive agenda under his 720° record label. Recently he joined forces with Mampi Swift on Charge and went solo on Metalheadz with 'Medusa' b/w 'Burnout', something that's been a long time in the offing. "I've been saying to Goldie I was gonna get him a tune since I used to see him at Speed in 95/'96 and we finally managed to get the link together."

When pushed he admits to being a "perfectionist." His music has always contained a certain depth and longevity, not something that always goes hand in hand with the dancefloor. The influence of Mampi Swift since he's touched down on Charge has pulled him more towards the 'floor and he's even DJing on the Charge tour nights. "It's a really good contrast," he reckons, "Swift will just come in and go 'nah, nah, quickly, come on as long as we hit the dancefloor!, We've met in the middle, Swift knows the dancefloor, and I spend a bit of time crafting stepping it up to the next level of production, it's pretty much a perfect combination."

Now that he's got a regular outlet for his heavier stuff and Metalheadz for certain things, the 720° label will feel the benefits. 720° is an underrated label that many people don't cream over at the counter because they don't leave their preconceptions at the door, yet over the years it's had some damn fine releases. "Its funny 'cos there's very different buyers into my different tunes. I've heard comments like 'I love Blame's tunes on this label but I don't know what he's doing on this label.' You've just got to keep making the music, 'Desert Planet' is the latest 720° release and I'm working on some new tracks from myself and also with Pedge from Dread (K.O.T.P)." The 720° label definitely seems to have got darker and more sinister sounding recently - has this been a conscious decision? "I just decided to make what I was feeling at the time. There's a lot of musical elements, but the vibe is darker and more uneasy. What's going on in the news everyday that reflects itself in the music that sort of stuff's going to come out in the music. That's got to be the ultimate thing about music - capturing a moment."

During 2004 Blame has been on a roll. Does he feel that way? "Definitely, I think this year has been the best for me in terms of production and getting tracks out. I've learnt so much in the last year and if I listen to a track I made a year ago and a track now, the production seems to have stepped up so much. The other thing is I've never had so many DJs playing my music apart from when I broke into the scene in 1991."

His original scene-breaker 'Music Takes You' was some entrance and the mix with the Seal vocal fetches over 200 quid on E-Bay. "I keep wishing I didn't give away as many copies," he laughs. "That was my first ever solo track, I used to work all week as a graphic designer and all I'd be thinking about was the one night in the studio. It was beginner's luck I have to say but there was a certain vibe I wanted to create and there were no musical boundaries for me then."

In 'Music Takes You' Blame created a rave monster and despite being obsessed with the studio he finally got to see it in action. "People were saying you've got to come out and hear your track. I finally got dragged out to Camden Palace and it got played in the middle of the night and everybody had their hands in the air. I didn't know what to do whether to run round and tell everyone or run up to the DJ! Now its like aah I knew I should have out more EQ on the snare, you kind of like lose a bit of the enjoyment when you produce so much 'cos you break it down like cogs in machinery."

Thirteen years later he's still making people go wild on the dancefloor, tracks like 'Rise Of The Machines' (Charge EP) in the hands of Andy C and Mampi has been making sure of that. All this talk about his career finally puts Blame in a reflective mood. "I've kind of looked at my whole career a bit differently lately. Everything has been a journey, full circle. I started off doing one-fingered riffs on a keyboard not knowing what I was doing, looking aimlessly at a computer screen in 1990, and by 1996 I was working with four or five live musicians in a studio trying to craft a kind of live jazz track. The contrast is incredible, it's coming through that journey and looking back at everything as a positive."

threads

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In the last century alone the world of music has witnessed no less than three major revolutions, each impacting on the way we consume music, the way it spreads and is recorded. And now at the dawn of a new century yet another revolution has engulfed the music world but this one has the potential to truly change the landscape of modern music like never before. The revolutions in question involve music formats. First we had vinyl, which has so far survived all the following revolutions and claims of its death. Then we had tapes which didn't survive so well. And then came CDs with people claiming they would once and for all kill all other formats. While not entirely true, CDs have played a big part in helping eradicate tapes and usher in the digital revolution. By the end of the century CDs had become the major format on which music is sold and consumed, alongside newer digital formats like DVD. Yet the foretold revolution was still waiting to happen: vinyl sales were on the up at the turn of the century, the turntable constantly outsold the guitar in most developed countries and DJs had never been so popular. The eternal death of analogue technologies is nowhere to be seen yet their continued existence have not hindered the progression and rise of digital technologies, and somehow a happy medium between both has installed itself since the late 90s. But it looks like all this could change…

Enter mp3s and the new generation of digital technologies and formats. These new formats have been able to impact on music and the industry as a whole with the help of the Internet and the rise of mp3 players such as Apple's Ipod. This second digital revolution really started attracting everyone's attention thanks to one computer program that used a fairly new system entitled P2P (Peer to Peer) and went by the name of Napster. Napster took the world by storm in the late 90s by letting anyone with a computer, internet connection and some common sense connect to a huge worldwide network of music enthusiasts and start swapping music anonymously. But as with all revolutions things had to come to an end when the major music companies realised that they were losing some serious money and had to be seen to do something about this new form of 'theft' and 'copyright violation' (the freely swapped music wasn't technically 'free' you see). Napster was shut down in 2002 but not before spawning massive communities who rallied under new programs and aliases to continue to share music freely and stick two fingers up at the music industry. Whilst the pros and cons of P2P software and communities can be debated ad-nauseam what really mattered was that Napster and its followers showed the music industry that they had missed their chance to cash in on the new digital revolution and that people weren't going to let such freedom and choice go so easily.

Something had to be done, yet it has taken nearly 5 years for anyone to do something about it. While not entirely the monster it's been claimed to be, online music piracy has created many problems for people further along down the chain of the industry. The majors are not the victims they'd like us to believe but the small independent labels and their artists are. If we look at the dance music industry, and dnb in particular, it's true that online piracy has created many problems and affected the sales of most labels (sales figures for dance music worldwide have been down for the last few years). Amongst the problems created is the fact that a whole generation of listeners and buyers of dnb have become used to not having to pay for the music they like. Add to that the growing amount of digital DJs who use CDs and mp3s instead of vinyl and you can see how instead of helping promote the music (which it has in ways) online sharing has only made it harder for most dnb professionals to go about their business. As Breakbeat Kaos label head Fresh put it to us recently "People need to realise that money for music is worth it at the end. [Piracy] is devaluing the whole buying process and creates a loss of respect of sorts from the buying public for the music. You can't just scrounge off the music and expect it to be fine."

So how does the scene get itself out of such a situation and make it better for both the professionals and the fans? Well following the attempts by the majors at creating legal download sites to rival illegal communities, such as Apple's Itunes store, the dance music industry has taken it into its own hands to provide the buying public with legal services where they can purchase all the latest tracks for nominal fees. Legal sites offer many advantages over illegal communities: the money you spend goes directly to the label and artists, the quality is great and format choices are possible, other peripheral services such as mixes, compilations, charts and more are on offer. And most important of all they help keep the scene so many people love alive. If early indications are anything to go by 2004 could prove to be the year that the dance music industry fights back. In dnb especially things have been moving fast since January and by year's end the public will have a wide choice of outlets from where to purchase mp3s legally. Between specialised outlets, label shops and community services the choices are only going to get bigger and better.

Let's take a look at what is on offer. From a specialised point of view the most interesting sites at the moment are Strictly Digital and Beatport. Both these sites are geared especially for dance music and already feature a good dose of dnb mp3s supplied by established labels.

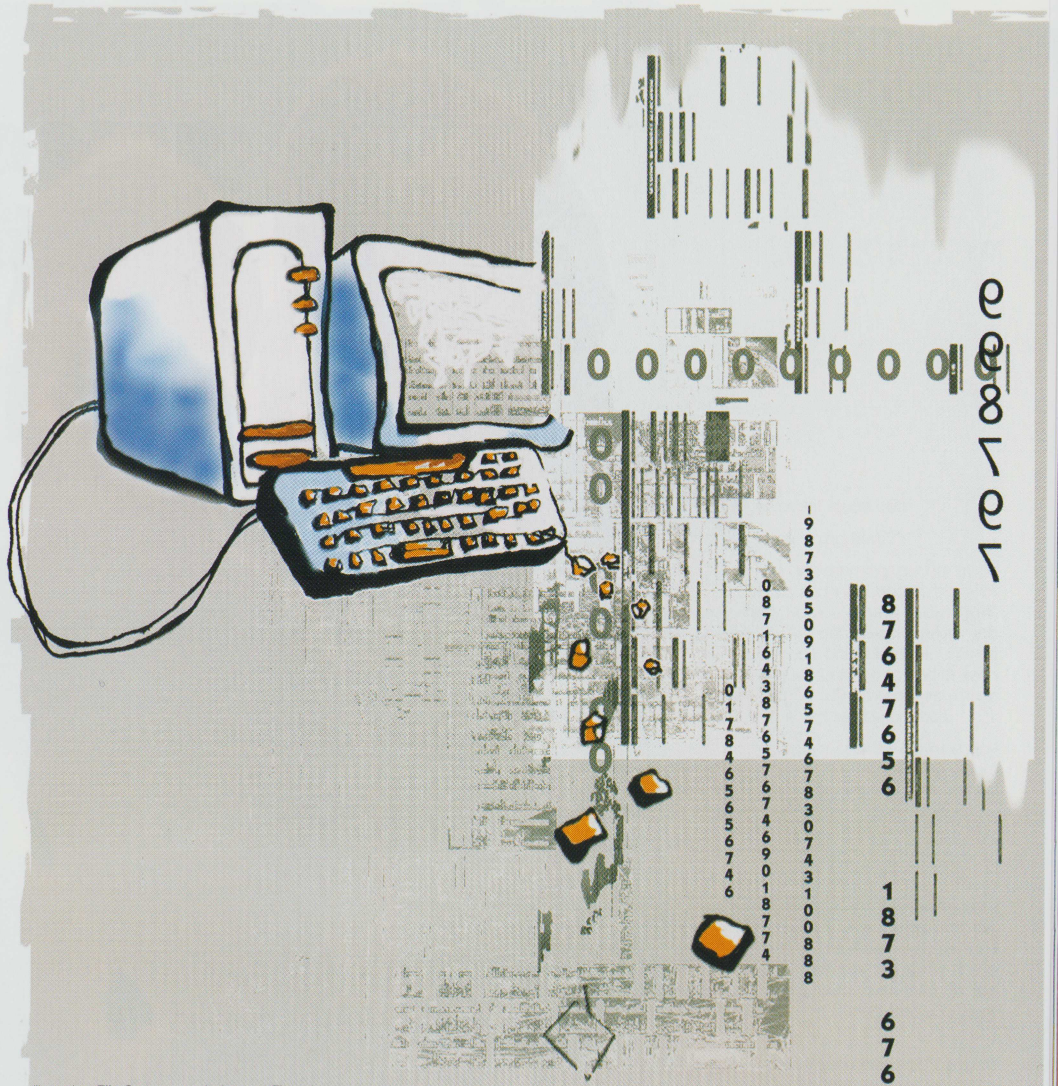


illustration: Ella Cooper words: Laurant Fintoni

THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVISED.... UNTIL NOW!

Scotland's Nerve Productions, Cargo Industries and Hive's Violence imprint have all been releasing their music through Beatport, and we've just found out that Breakbeat Kaos and DOA will also be release their catalogue through them. Strictly Digital already offers tracks from Defunked, Dread, Jerona Fruits and Nu Directions amongst others, and also offers added incentives such as exclusive tracks by artists signed to the labels, free bonus downloads and a loyalty scheme. They also both feature chart systems in much the same way HMV and Virgin do. What also makes these two sites interesting for dnb aficionados is that they both involve dnb professionals as part of their team with the UK based Strictly Digital headed by Nookie and the dnb division of US based Beatport headed by one half of D'Ecco and Sabotage.

One last addition to the specialised sites is IMO Download which launches in September with the promise of 10,000 tracks available for download covering dnb, old school and more. On the label shops front the first to enter the mp3 market look set to be True Playaz, who are putting the finishing touches to their online shop. Once running it will offer all the vinyl and CD releases on mp3s. Pascal pointed out that "[what did] it for me was looking at p2p networks and seeing all my stuff on there and you can't fight that. But you can offer people an alternative. With high quality mp3s you can make a difference. If there is no stopping it, then work with it." And it's only a matter of time before other leading labels follow suit. Lastly on the community side the first sign of activity comes from dnb arena who are also putting the final touches to their online store. It will sit nicely along the site's vinyl shop and dnb arena's now popular dub and singles sections where you can stream all the latest tracks.

Other important points are price and formats. Prices on all these sites are nominal, and well below the average price in stores. Average online price looks set to be around £1.50, varying from store to store with bonuses for multiple buys and in some instances cheaper prices for back catalogue items. The most important aspect of the price beyond the appeal to the customers is that by bypassing the production process required for any other musical format mp3s give the artists a much higher cut then they would normally receive. A single priced at £1.50 for each side will give the artist more money than a vinyl single priced at £7. Format wise, while the major companies such as Apple and Microsoft fight to corner the market by providing music that is playable only on their own player (some people never learn), online dance music shops all offer mp3s at high quality (from 192 to 320 kpbs, over twice the quality of CD) and in some instances also offer wavs and windows media files, all playable on a multitude of portable players. The issue of format is most important for the digital DJs who can choose what suits them best and benefit from a quality that has so far been totally uneven from the illegal communities.

So the digital revolution is well and truly underway and even if it will be some time before the legal sites overtake the illegal communities most people are hopeful that, as was the case the first time round with Napster, things will change for the better and the scene as a whole will soon benefit from more business and growing communities and networks that will relay illegal ones to the fringe. Another important factor is that by growing in strength and presence, legal download sites will also offer more opportunities for up and coming DJs, artists and producers to get their music out there and get paid for it, whilst making sure that quality control is high and that not just anyone releases their music onto the expecting public. While illegal communities have certainly created the space for people to share their own music with the world, the absence of any sort of quality control also has its drawback which can be eradicated by the overtake of legal services. The future is coming, maybe not today or tomorrow but soon things will change and those with an interest in the music better be ready for it.

RONI SIZE & BRYAN GEE

Words: **Laurant Fintoni.** Pics: **Hacker**.

There are defining moments in music that change the way you perceive it. In dnb these moments can be few and far between but they stay in your mind for years after. The first time Marky hit these windy shores, the Latin invasion that followed, the arrival of Ozzy trio Pendulum on the scene, the recent return of Photek to the frontline are just some of these moments. More recently one of dnb's leading names has returned to his starting ground, joining forces again with one dnb's leading ambassadors and labels. The names? Roni Size and Bryan Gee of course, and the album is none other than the prodigal Return To V, Roni's fifth album outing. So what better way to celebrate this triumphant return then by cornering both Roni and Bryan and quizzing them on their origins and the soon to be most famous return in dnb history. It's been ten years in the making…

Let's start at the beginning. How did you two meet and when did you start working together?
B: We met a long time ago, ten, twelve years ago. And that was through me liking his music and setting up V Recordings after he'd sent me some. Originally though we met through tapes basically.

R: I was sending my tunes to these guys up in Bath who worked at Rhythm King, which was where Bryan used to work. And basically they was giving him the tunes, and they were going round in this circle.

B: When I listened to the tapes, with my background coming from reggae, I could feel where Roni was coming from and I could hear things that I really liked. It had a lover's rock kind of vibe, reggae vibe. But with the jungle approach and I was like 'yeah!' I wanted to find out who he was, because that's what I'm like. So I went down there to meet him and he turned up with Krust and we went round someone's yard just to listen to music and we got to know each other, vibe and we made a good contact. Then we pushed them a bit more, because we knew their music was gonna go somewhere and people were starting to pay attention. They just continued making music and sending it down me so it was inevitable that we would start a label after this. At the same time though they were doing stuff down in Bristol and they started talking about setting up Full Cycle.

R: We were working with a label called WTP (Where The Party), run by a guy called Chris, and we put out our first tune on that. It was some ragga jungle tune called 'Wicked dem rule'

B: that was a wicked tune!

R: Between trying to put a record out and trying to understand what we were doing, we gave a copy to Bryan and started getting feedback. Then we would go back in the studio and try and adapt to the vibe and so eventually we had a bunch of records that they were cutting and playing out.

B: I was even cutting them from tapes at the time!

R: And giving them to Trace, Ray Keith, Bukem etc... It was just good to get feedback on our stuff from all these guys. So we just kept making tunes, not even thinking about putting them out really. Until Bryan came down and he was like 'I want to put a label together called Vinyl Experience'. And because we got to know each other as friends really well before it's why it happened really. We used to come up to London and we'd go to Bryan's yard straight away and we always used to go to Music House and Bryan kind of introduced us to everyone on the scene.

B: It was exciting times. We were all young heads, no one knew where it was it going. We was young, it was exciting. Even for me setting up V Recordings, or Vinyl Experience as it was called, but that was a mouthful so we cut it down to V. But at the time it was just something so I could play records. It's not like we thought we could make some money or anything.

Jumping forward, twelve years down the line did you ever see yourselves where you are now?

R: I didn't for one second!

B: No

R: But every year, every time something happened, that's what was really exciting. We were learning constantly even when we started releasing tracks on V. It wasn't until we had a tune that everyone was playing…

B: I'd say that was 'Music Box'.

R: No, I think it was 'It's a Jazz Thing'. For me personally, it was the one tune everyone was playing. People picked it up, guys like you and Frost, Gilles, people outside the scene as well, which was what made it so important for me.

B: But 'Music Box' really set the Roni Size thing for me.

R: 'Music Box' was Die and me. Back in the day for me Jungle were these disoriented beats that didn't gel together and Die kept on bugging me saying 'put the snare on the one, put it on the one'. And we did and that's how we got into that little vibe. And I think it was at that time that people started changing the name as well. It switched to dnb.

B: When there was what people said was trouble and Jungle had a bad rep. It was a good thing to happen because it made all the producers go to different places and experiment and made this thing broader and more open. I think it was a good thing to happen for sure.

R: I think that people like Bukem, Peshay and WaxDoctor started to really put a musical element in the music which was good. I think that because we all used to go to Music House, talk about what the music was and what everyone was sampling that's what made it what it was. Whereas now no one is in the same room as everyone else anymore. We're all online, but being at Music House you didn't have a choice but to chat to Kane, Mickey, Groove and everyone had to talk…

B: It was different back then.

R: And sometimes it was ugly and sometimes it was really creative as well. And I think that's how the music changed so much over those years. It was all because of Music House. It was like its own forum…

B: Definitely! Music House made people integrate and bounce ideas off each other. Just learn as well, because what I didn't know about the scene the next person might tell me about it. Everyone was doing different things and you have to remember we all came into this young with no rules or nothing so a lot of people came into this very inexperienced, just wanting to make music and not knowing the business side of things. But it was good.

R: It was the hunger. You knew you'd go to Music House and cut ten plates and do five gigs in that weekend and you knew that by the end you'd know what your tunes would sound like, what worked and what didn't. Same thing as now really but the personal touch back then was what made it. Nowadays I don't see a lot of the scene because simply there isn't a common place where everyone goes to share the music. In a club you can meet people but you can't really talk to someone in there, it's just too loud these days.

B: The only time I really get to hang out with anyone nowadays is when I go abroad and we're on a plane together. That is worrying because we're in times where everyone wants everything fast, no one's got time to go to Music House or places like that. People want to send things down the line because it's quicker but you're losing the personal, human touch. At the same time being online is beneficial. I can cut shop with people from around the world. But let me put it this way: before when I played tracks, everyone's records in my set were my friends'. People I knew really good. But now half of my set is from people I've never seen before in my life. So it's good, because it's opened up the door, it's made it easier for people out there to get in. Because if you wasn't part of the Music House click you wasn't part of it at all.

R: When you heard a foreign voice it stood out!

B: Yeah you'd be like 'what you doing here?'

R: Me and Krust would get up in the morning, get our gyros and come straight up on the bus and into London, hit six or seven shops and a few stalls. So you'd have Lucky Spin, Section Five, Horis down in Camden, Blackmarket and there would be a couple of shops on Oxford St… There were so many different shops you could go to and in each you would see different people. On a Friday you would see these people all over the place going for the promos.

B: We used to wait at Horis' market stall for the next guy to come with a box of records. You'd be waiting hours because you knew someone was coming with this box full of new records…

R: And it was cold…

B: Those were the fun things about it.

R: I can honestly say, I wasn't there at the beginning but I was fortunate to experience some of the things and the characters who were dedicated to this music way before I even knew about it. These people like Horis, all these names we're talking about, you could hear them in the market shouting out the tunes. And during that you were tuning into Kool FM all the time.

B: My show on Kool was legendary and that was partly to do with Full Cycle and the freshness that you guys were bringing. It was so important because of the music that was coming through at the time.

R: And me and Krust used to go round Bryan's, drop the bags on the floor and argue about who would kip on the sofa! Sometimes you'd end up cold on the floor. Back in the days! It was stamina, get up in the morning and back on the road again.

Roni, did you know you'd go back to Bryan one day and say we're gonna do another V album?
R: I think more importantly, I don't think it felt like I was gonna go anywhere else. We were lucky to be a part of what happened with Talkin' Loud and Reprazent, but it's not until you come right back and you start to actually reflect on things that you can settle down and think 'yeah this feels right.' I was always going to put an album out on V, even before I did an LP on Talking Loud I knew I'd put one out on V. The only reason I got a deal with Talkin' Loud is because of the music I was putting out on V. It was like a blessing as well. At the time Bryan had been offered a deal with Talkin' Loud to do an album and we thought of what to do and he said 'you know guys this could be a once in a lifetime opportunity'. So we all tried to do it and do it correct.

B: Personally I think that was the right move. The experience and everything else that we picked up and learnt from it, we managed to bring back to V and to Full Cycle.

R: Going with Talkin' Loud and XL, and touring the world we always made sure we carried V and Full Cycle with us. They were never, ever left aside. Because you know that when you go to a major that's limited time. Unless you sell pop records and you're willing to compromise your sound. So we always knew there was gonna be a point where we'd come back to Bristol and London and focus on the music and our labels. For me putting out this record is a testament to that. I would love to have done a third Reprazent album because we had so much support out there. It was getting bigger but we fell short and had to go back and start again. And that is why for me Return to V is about trying to find who I am. Because when you travel to Brazil, to Japan it's gonna influence your music. People will come up to you and sing the lyrics to all your songs in a foreign language and if you don't let that affect your music then you shouldn't be doing this.

Bryan, did you have any say on the LP or were you happy to let Roni do his thing?
B: Well what happened is that the LP changed (laughs).

Two years ago Roni kept doing track after track and every now and again we'd say 'Yeah this one'. But the album was more of a long player, instrumentals, that type of thing. Which to me at the time was a good album. I don't know what happened but personally I think it's when he went to Jamaica. That's when I think he changed, that's how I look at it, because before you went to Jamaica you said to me 'master the album'. It was practically finished, but I didn't master it. You went to Jamaica and someone told me about the vibe you got there. You came back and you was like 'nah, vocals' and you just had a different outlook with what you wanted to do with the album and I left you with that and it just came together how we wanted to, with more vocals and more of an album feel really.

R: I was working on three or four different projects at one time, but the thing is I was just searching for vibes. When I went to Jamaica I was listening to the album and the rest of my stuff and getting people to listen to it, and I found it hard to play them instrumentals because I could see they were waiting for vocals. And that's when I thought 'I can't put this record out.' Because there are people who won't get it, they'll need a bit more. So I thought 'what am I waiting for? I need to put out my best music which is on my computer right now!' That's my philosophy for life now. I will put out my best music, I don't care wherever it goes. I will go to my computer and take out my best tunes… that are finished (laughs) because I've got to chat with Victor Duplaix about this bad track that isn't finished.

B: When I'm in the car with friends it's one of those albums where as each track comes on everyone can sing. Whereas before it was different, and even with most dnb albums I don't get that vibe because either there isn't enough vocals or whatever, but this album gives me that vibe. Everyone's got their little sing-along. And that's the beauty of it. It's such a feel good vibe. You've got legends on there like Jocelyn Brown from my House days, from my days as a DJ. She was a diva back then and to know that I'm running a label and she is on one of the tracks is just wicked!

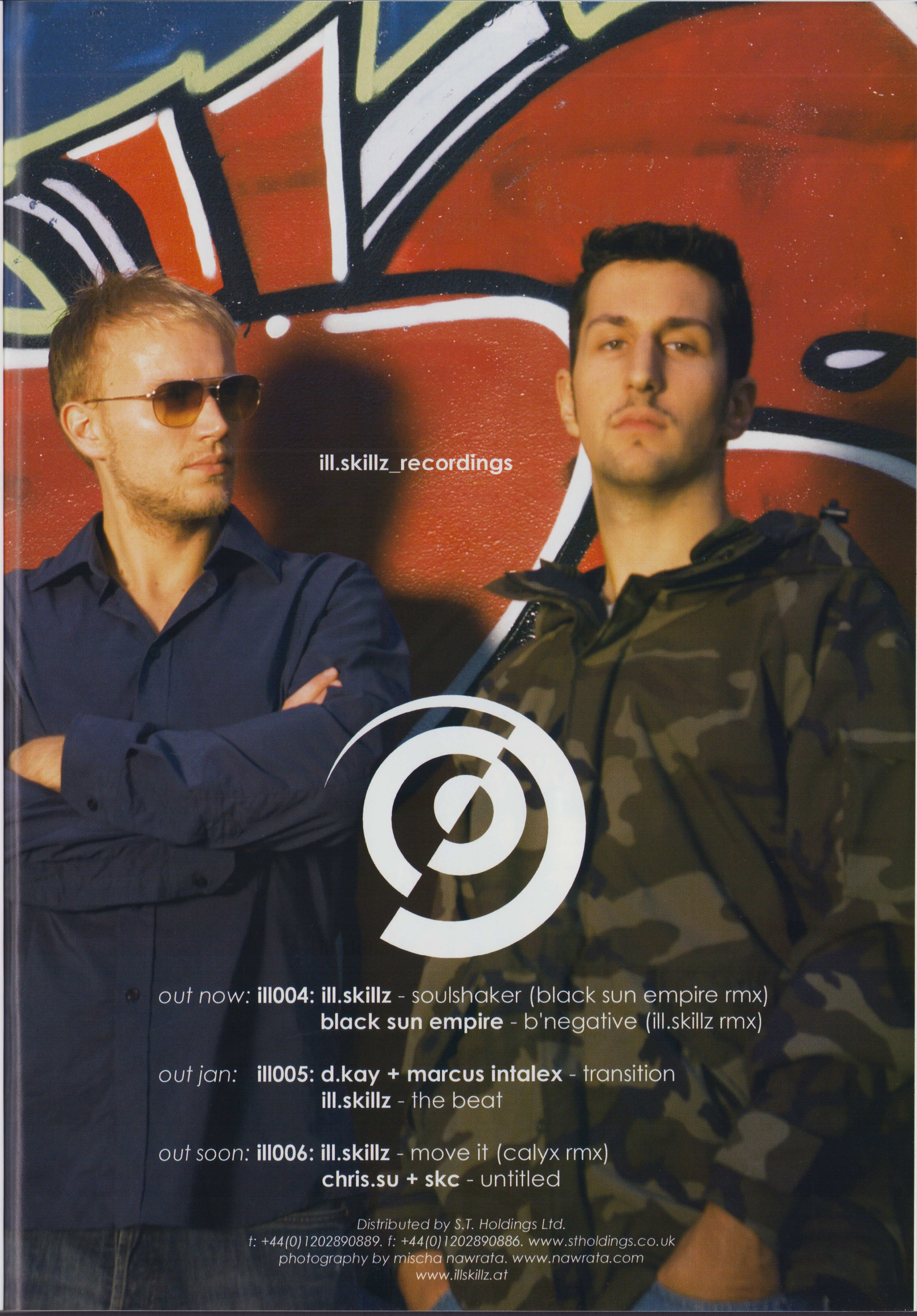
R: It's only recently since I started talking about the album that I realize what it is to me as well. I call it my ark, where I've taken two of everything like Noah's Ark. Two soul vibes with Beverley and Jocelyn, but it's one from my past and one from my future. And then like Sweety Irie is a bit of my past and Wilks is a bit of my future. For me there is almost two of everything. Darrison, Rodney, Fallacy, Vikter, Sweet Pea, there's people on there that have influenced me, and I've tried to fill the gaps.

What originally attracted you to play live shows?
R: The first thing was seeing Goldie at Glastonbury on the main stage and I was so in awe! That was incredible for me. The second thing was reading a lot of the negative press where everyone was saying this music is bedroom DJs music, it's never going to come out of that. And the third thing was the pressure of being involved with a major and having finished your album they turn around to you and say 'when we going live then?' And I was speechless. But that's a challenge I rose to. I sat down with Krust, Die and the others and we all started to work out how we were going to do this. Once we worked it out we took the dat away… but that took fifty shows! Now when people ask me that question I do say that it's all because nothing sounds as big and powerful live, no other music. Heavy metal, we crush them. We sound big and the energy we give out I love it. In the studio you can get the sound right a certain way and vinyl always sounds great but live, it never sounds the same twice. The problem we've got at the moment is that people can't see what we do. They can hear but can't see dnb. I want people to see it to help its understanding.

B: It's true, for years we've been saying dnb is faceless… And this album can help with that, help put a little face on it. It's got big names jumping out at you.

R: Live is so important because it's one of the main ways in which we'll get people to take this music seriously today. Not the only way, but probably the best.

Any plans for the future you wanna tell us about?
R: Yeah we've got a lot of downtempo stuff coming out soon. What's happened is that a lot of the people we've taken on board over the last few years are people that like jungle but don't wanna make jungle. They like hip hop but don't wanna make hip hop. They chat lyrics, but not in a hip hop or garage way. But they wanna dance in one way to the drums and another way to the bass. And that's the kind of people we've got making music for us now, but it's shit that I didn't know about. So in the way that you've got this thing going on in London with grime, you've got kids in Bristol listening to our blines but putting slow beats to them and they've got their own little slang. It's different and there is a lot of it. The first time, second time you might not get it because it's new. I'm a little bit nervous about letting it off at the moment but it'll come out. It's not me doing it though, all I'm doing is offering the platform. People have come to me because they've been directly influenced by Full Cycle, Jungle and the Bristol thing you know? We turn to them and tell them to go and do their thing. Some of these guys are wicked. So that's the future man, future anthems.



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KOOL KEITH

Words: **Jesse Keene**

At 1st it was hard for me to think of a format in which to present this piece to you the reader, it was a long time coming but also held a certain amount of curiosity for me, because it became almost a search for Keith. Phone calls were made, e-mails sent, miscommunication and computer trouble were all contributing factors in this but in hind sight what else should have I expected when tracking down such a unique and elusive character in the realm of Hip-Hop? The king of the rhyme, master of illusion and persona seem to sum him up in some odd sense but his reach and influences run a lot deeper than that. Originally from the Legendary 80's NYC based crew Ultramagnetic Mc's where he staked his claim as one of the quickest witted and distinct Rappers of his time. The Ultra's as crew were to be hailed as ground breaking within Hip-Hop for years to come, making the source's top 20 hip-hop album that you must own. Not to stay stagnant it was then no suprise that it was not long before Keith turned his attentions to solo projects. These included the critically acclaimed Doctor Octagon LP with Dan the Automator, not forgetting to mention his work with The Prodigy, Ice-T, Motion Man through to his new release "Diesel Truckers" with long time compardre Kut Master Kurt. He is an active guy for sure, not only has he been touring extensively but he has also been working on tracks for the new Undatakerz album which sees production from Crash Berlin, Money D and Keith himself. It's a different mix of sounds all brought to you in the only way he would have it - anything but normal. I finally caught up with him for a brief chat on the new projects that he has been involved in and the real dynamics of not having to fly onto stage to impress the audience, you figure it out!?!

So to take you back to before the Ultramagnectic era, who would you say were your main influences when it comes down to the music that you make?

The main big influences on me when I was up growing that I consider to be inspirational to me when it comes to making music were groups like cameo, brick, grand funk, slade, gap band, confunktion, undisputed truth.... Most definitely all the early funk in the 70s, that was an important era for me musically and ultimately had a lasting effect on me when it came to developing my music career….

You have definitely had a varied career as a musician, could you elaborate on some of the high points?

Well the high point for me was Ultramagnetic MCS because that was the point where I was defining my character, my skills and experimenting with new forms of music. It was 80s and all types of new music were breaking. We were ahead of our time breaking new ground. Hip-hop hadn't been defined yet. People didn't know what it was yet. They had ideas but there was new ground constantly being cut. That was a special time for me. Looking back knowing I was defining something new. History in the making....

At the moment you are involved in projects with Crash Berlin, Thee Undatakerz, could you let the people know a little bit about what these projects are about?

My relationship with Crash Berlin came out of him doing a remix of Thee Undatakerz single Party in The Morgue which is going on the new Blade 3 soundtrack movie. I met him in Hollywood because his cousin was tagging the apartment building of which my cousin Money D lived in. Money D had caught him and they called Crash to come over to pick him up. They got to talking and Money D mentioned that he worked with me. He is a phat beat maker in Hollywood so naturally we came to together in a strange way. I like what he is up to .It sounds progressive to me. I'm so bored with Hip-Hop at the moment. Cuz Crash has a foot in the dance scene and that's where I can hear new sounds and beats coming from, we have lots of plans for new ideas and music in the next coming year. I'm really feelin the collaboration that I have done with Crash Berlin-Aquasky." MOVIN THE HYPE TRACK" it sounds fresh and progressive to me. I want new sounds, new beats...tracks like this keep me inspired, and I do want to do more in the future..

You have been busy doing tours as well as making music so how's has that been to be on the road and how has the reception been to the shows?

I've been doing tours and shows for so long I've become a little tired of the scene. There is always critics there closely examining the irrelevant things going on. How long did he play? What shoes is he wearing? Etc the crowd nowadays is such a t.v. generation. They come to a show and they want to see an action movie. They want to see rockets going off. They want to see Kut Masta Kurt drive onstage in a diesel truck or some shit. They want to smell the fumes; they want to feel the heat from the exhaust pipes. They are an action film audience. They want Kool Keith to parachute from a jet and land onstage stage singing "Blue Flowers". Their expectations are so high nowadays. When you don't come in on a crane with a cape on they go "I was bummed Keith didn't come in on a crane last night...He didn't put his head in a lions mouth" People forget hip-hop came from a poor urban environment. The music that was created was done between couple of neighbourhood crews next to a dark lamppost on their street. Things are so blinged out nowadays we have lost the root of how it was created in the first place. So for the live shows I try to bring a feeling of intimacy. You know, bringing you back to how it was back in the day. Let you listen to my story. There is no story with new artists that are about nowadays. They are just manufactured, plastic people….

So Finally with tours being the order of the day and you being known as you are known as the extravagant traveller could you name your top 5 world destinations and why they have a meaning for Kool Keith?

1. New Orleans: The Cajun food. Festive atmosphere
2. Amsterdam: Very open-minded ...free.... Festive
3. Miami: Lots of hole in the wall clubs and strip clubs
4. Milwaukee: Very urban... it's not as dead as you would think
5. Indianapolis: Just good down-home hospitality

Well, it's time to launch our regular terrorist attack on the twin towers of Software and Hardware again. This issue in Equipped, we have reviews on some tantalising Technics headphones, the fantastic all-new Final Scratch and some off-the-hook Oakley Digital Sunglasses!"? to name but a few.

HARDWARE.

So let's start with the Hardware section and the Oakleys, as most of you are probably off on your winter snowboard can't do it properly but I've got a £300 coat, poser holiday right now.

Oakley Thump Digital Eyewear.

Long-time snow, skate and surf heroes Oakley, have busted onto the street with a world first, Digital Music Eyewear. What! Yeah it's for real, a pair of bad-boy sunglasses that can be loaded with compressed (MP3) digital tracks directly from your PC or Mac using the high speed USB connection on-board. The built-in small and discrete Walkman style headphones sit nicely on the arm of the glasses in perfect position to fit snugly into the ear of any hardcore mobile music fan.

No more wires, state Oakley, just high-performance optics and a digital audio engine are used to stream roughly 60 tracks or about 4 hours of tunes directly into the brain!

Thump comes in 7 colour combinations (black and silver is the one!) and 2 models, 128Mb and 256 Mb, plus it weighs in at only 50 grams (that's just under 2 ounces of skunk lads) and carries an internal 6 hour rechargeable battery.

Oh yeah, do they protect you from the sun? Of course they do, its Oakley! Apparently, they have Plutonite lens material (which they presumably got from Superman down Dagenham Market) which blocks 100% of all UV rays, and Iridium lens coatings that gives optimised vision in any light, I knew that! Plus the frames flip up to allow the continuous play of music even when you go in-doors!

They retail from between £269 and £365 and if anyone can find anything that's cooler than these, I'll eat my designer snowboard hat!

Check www.oakley.com for more spec, get it?

Gemini CDJ-02.

Moving swiftly on, Gemini has released a couple of interesting new products of late. The CDJ-02 being the first, as the CD mixing market reaches boiling point, Gemini have stepped in with an able contender.

The CDJ-02 is a distinctly fresh pro-table-top CD player that is VERY DJ-friendly, it has a slot-in front loading mechanism with a bright blue in-out LED indicator (I like this 'sexy blue lights thing' that's happening right now), with several useful features including seamless loop in/out with re-loop, a flexible range of pitch settings (4%, 8% & 16%) and direct selection fully programmable number keypad (calculator style) making it innovative and easy to use. The large jog wheels rubber soft touch dial has finger grooves making it great for precise cueing, frame accurate searching and mixing (if a little small?), and Coaxial digital and stereo RCA outputs. To complement this stealthy unit, there is an ultra bright blue LCD display for track information and large illuminated soft touch play, pause and cue buttons. There's not too much you can say about CDJ's these days really, as they all do pretty much the same thing, but Gemini's 02 is definitely one of the better budget ones out there, coming in at roughly the £185 mark and sizing up nicely in any compact DJ's set up, with the pre-mentioned calculator style keypad pushing it just in front for originality.

Visit www.gemini.com for more info, and while your there, check out Gemini's other vital release, the UMX Special Edition Mixer.

Gemini UMX Special Edition mixer.

The UMX Special Edition is a 3-channel, 10" Professional VCA mixer, and is advertised as "The perfect battle mixer from the clubs to the street".

More blue and red light emitting diodes (LED in case you didn't know, like me until yesterday), light up the master and EQ VU meters on the top panel of the mixer, giving it a stylish original look. The UMX design consists of a steel reinforced body that includes an assignable Railglide cross-fader with hamster (reverse) switch & curve control knob, with metal EQ & gain knobs for precise control and sturdiness. The three stereo channels feature VCA sliders (With VCA technology, audio is processed in a voltage-controlled amplifier, removing it from the cross-fader and channel slides giving them extended life and reducing travel noise) with individual low, mid, high, and gain controls, slide curve control with 3 settings, and adjustable line input assign switches, plus stereo panning and cut control feature.

There is also the state of the art push button cueing with volume & horizontal line cue fader controls for accurate mixing, plus the SE has a total of 11 inputs, consisting of 3 phono/line convertible inputs, 2 phono, 5 Line, 1 microphone, and finally there are master, zone, record, and balanced XLR outputs with separate master & zone volume controls, not to mention the gold plated input connections and ground screws.

For around £339, the UMX SE is a useful, rich sounding mixer, with all the essential quality mixer accessories appearing on board.

Don't forget, www.gemini.com

Technics RP-DH1200 Headphones.

Created with the professional DJ in mind, this latest piece of Technics kit has a stylish design as always, available in a black and silver combo, the RP-DH1200's are the perfect match for the Technic's new SL-DZ1200 digital turntables if you wanna look the coolest cat on the block. They have a foldable, padded headband and swivel mechanism for easy single side monitoring. The large 50mm drive units not only offer maximum comfort but also allow an even and unrestricted distribution of sound. When teamed with 5Hz to 30Hz of frequency response, these babies offer superb treble response and, with its rich, deep and warm sound, offer arguably the best bass response available at the top end of the market, certainly the clearest bass I've heard in a pair of cans.

As if all that wasn't enough, the RP-DH1200 offers additional features including, 3500mW of power, (So that DJ's can experience maximum sound level in the booth), a sensitivity level of 106dB/mW, an impedance of 50ohm/per 1kHz, Gold platted jack plug, 3mtr detachable coil lead, and a tasty carry pouch.

Everybody needs a decent set of expensive, crisp sounding, ear bleedingly loud headphones, and with the 1200's available now for around £119.99, they are definitely 'The One' Neo.

Travel on the cyber-bus to www.panasonic.co.uk for a bit more of the good stuff.

SOFTWARE.

Now to the software section of equipped, focusing on mixing into the future and drum samples from hell, burn your vinyl and use it for ashtrays, its time for the next level in digital file mixing...

Final Scratch 2.

Stanton rocked the ATM world when we reviewed Final Scratch some time ago, time-code embedded digital music files mixed from a laptop on blank pieces of vinyl is without a doubt the way to move forward, and now they've done it again, with Final Scratch 2.

At the heart of FS 2 is the new ScratchAmp 2, new 24-bit/96kHz hardware with Mic input, and a FireWire® audio interface that delivers maximum audio throughput with minimal latency, allowing the software decks to respond as quickly as your hands, which is exactly what FS needs, USB is soooo old skool, and because the ScratchAmp 2 is passive, you can run audio through the amp without power, plus the thru-port lets you connect an iPod™ or external hard drive, does it get any better than this? Yes it does! We now see Traktor FS 2 powering the whole DJ side of things, which gives users a host of powerful features like looping, independent control over pitch and tempo, plus onboard filter effects and the ability to non-destructively record and edit your mix.

There's a vast array of new features here, including: new mic recording with instant playback from vinyl, new input recording for capturing your live mix direct to disk, new cue points for marking breaks or other important sections, new intelligent play history with time stamp and printing, new onscreen 1-minute markers for faster visual cueing, new assignable commands using "hot keys" or MIDI control, and compatibility with Apple® iTunes™

Life really doesn't get any better than this, for £549.00 I cannot say enough brown nose comments about Final Scratch!

Check www.finalscratch.com and BELIEVE THE HYPE!

Native Instruments Battery 2.

We see another barrage of releases from Native Instruments of late, the first noticeably being Battery 2. This is N.I's next generation of drum sampler, with this new 256 voice polyphony version featuring a tweaked up sampling engine, better sound shaping and modulation capabilities, enhanced control of samples and a revamped user interface. The major new changes are support for hard disc streaming, which you couldn't do before, and polyphonic voice groups sampling with overlap, and a new visual mapping editor, plus the customizable cell matrix now contains up to 72 sample cells allowing the use of super large drum kits for that 'live' feel. Sound shaping is also enhanced with a new compressor section as well as a killer multimode filter with 15 filter types from resonant low pass to parametric equalizers as well as comb and vowel filters. Some other new kids on the block worth mentioning are an LFO, freely assignable envelope, mapping editor managing 128 sample-layers per cell, re-sampling effect and an extended Loop section.

BATTERY 2 is compatible with a wide range of sample-formats, ensuring that you can import the exact samples required, and will function nicely on any PC or Mac with around 512Mb of memory.

A new sample library of more than 3.5 Gb of high quality drum and percussion samples is thrown in for good measure, including natural drums and percussion, orchestral percussion, electronic drum kits, and a selection of specials as well as an optimized version of the BATTERY 1 library.

Now available on-line at www.native-instruments.com Battery 2 will set you back around 150.00 from scratch, and is a must for all serious drum programmers.

Native Instruments Kontakt 1.5

Also from N.I is the update of Kontakt to version 1.5

The new version brings many new and improved features, including a Beat Machine for slicing and syncing loops, the excellent Time Machine II, VST automation and much more.

The other noticeably advantageous features are that drag and drop support is now no longer limited to the browser: files and instruments can also be dragged and loaded directly into KONTAKT from the desktop, plus KONTAKT 1.5 now integrates a newly developed Beat Machine, which makes it possible to take finished loops and divide them into individual slices.

For better readability there is a new font built into the browser, which can also be magnified, and a new quick-search function, which scans the hard disk once for samples, which makes finding missing samples later on much faster.

A convenient feature has been added to the mapping editor: zones can be locked to prevent them from being accidentally shifted, plus the fine tuning of master control can now be altered in detailed steps of +/- 200 cent - perfect for individual voices.

KONTAKT 1.5 further expands its compatibility to professional sample formats: the new version can now import REX™, EXS MK II™ and Samplecell™ (Digidesign) as well. Version 1.5 can also load sounds from KOMPAKT and INTAKT as well as KOMPAKT INSTRUMENTS, INTAKT INSTRUMENTS and KONTAKT PLAYER.

With version 1.5, KONTAKT is compatible to Mac OS X and can be used standalone or as a plug-in and supports Core Audio™, Core MIDI™, Audio Units™, VST® 2.0 and RTAS, RTAS is also included for Windows XP, plus in addition to the MIDI automation in version 1.2, KONTAKT 1.5 now also supports VST automation. This allows for much more convenient integration with VST-compatible host sequencers. Nearly all control element movements can be drawn as automation curves in the sequencer and remote-controlled. Since KONTAKT is semi-modular, a VST automation number can be quickly and easily assigned to any KONTAKT control element.

You know you need this in your life! So, users who purchased KONTAKT after August 1, 2003 are entitled to a Grace Period update (proof of purchase required). Updaters can get the update as a free download or order a CD-ROM for a small fee, also from www.native-instruments.com, sounds like you're on a winner to me Rodney!

Well it's back to digital file mixing again, and have we got a rival for the unprecedented Final Scratch 2?

Sennheiser. Serato Scratch Live.

Those cheeky quality headphone people at Sennheiser, along with DJ equipment manufacturers Rane, and New Zealand based software developers Serato, have just announced a new arrival into the world, ahh. The Serato Scratch Live is a competitor for FS, in the fact that it enables you to mix digital music files on blank pieces of vinyl straight from the computer. Serato live does a few things FS doesn't do, (but there's also a few things FS does do, that this doesn't do, tongue-twister of the month or what?)

Serato allows CD level inputs using blank CD'S, which FS only does after spending more cash on an adaptor, and it also has a microphone that lets you record straight into the computer then instantly scratch mix, you can also set it to play back music regardless of needle position, which allows the software to keep playing even if the record reaches the end, wow! Plus, Serato allows cue points to be recorded to find the right spot on your track instantly.

The user interface looks classy, and informative for the user, with some nice graphed out graphics of your tracks running down the centre of the console.

So, it looks good, feels good, sounds good, and is it a match for the Scratch?

For £575 only you can decide, it's a specialist piece of DJ/Producer kit, and you really need to 'feel it' for yourself... check www.rane.com for availability.

Last minute news!

I have to briefly mention in my last dying words, a couple of tasty news morsels. Apple opened their doors for the first time in London's Regent Street recently. Expect to find inside, the usual myriad of cool and sexy Mac products, like the new I-Mac and the dual processor liquid cooled G5's, alongside the new I-Pod-I-Photo, which now allows you to carry your private image collection around with you as-well as your tunes! www.apple.com will tell you all you need to know.

In other news, Allen & Heath have launched a brand new web-site totally devoted to their Xone range. Once logged on, you can gather a mind of information, downloads, and inside spec on possibly the best mixers in the world! And some insight into the stunning new VF-1 filter unit, for the £3000 Xone V6 to be reviewed next issue. Go to www.xone.co.uk for the serious bizness.

PHANTASY & SHODAN

pic: Cleveland Aaron
words: Mark OD

Monday morning is never the best time to get hold of people but after a couple of attempts ATM track Phantasy down at his Easy Records office, his partner-in-crime Shodan has more pressing concerns, though, as he's losing to his girl at the bowling alley.

"I've come up to Yarmouth to see the missus and there's fuck all better to do to be honest," he jokes. Interviewing someone playing bowls is a first and ATM are soon getting running commentary. "Hang on a minute, here we go, I've only fucked that one up!" he shouts.

Back over at the Easy office one of the scene's longest serving veterans is busy taking care of business. "I've always been doing things at the forefront and behind the scene, but its only when you do something big that people go 'oh yeah! so that's what there up to!' I'm out every week playing all over the World but because people don't see me on certain big raves they think I'm not about, which is a shame, but it takes a tune like 'Gimme Da Gal' to make people sit up and take notice."

'Gimme Da Gal' on Hype's 'Dubplate Killaz' LP has introduced Phantasy to a whole new generation of ravers and its helped Shodan make his mark after years of trying to make an impression on the scene. The track featuring UK Apache chatting some incendiary lyrics has burned many a rave this year "It was a case of the right place at the right time with that one," reckons Terry Shodan as he takes a breather from his lane exerts to light a fag and explain more. "We'd done the original track and called it '4 Bass' 'cos there's four bass noises in it. UK heard it whilst performing abroad with Phantasy, 'cos he goes out to Germany, Canada and various places a lot with him and come to us with these lyrics. At first I wasn't sure but as soon as he'd done them I was chuffed. I think without the vocals it would have done reasonably well but the vocals stepped it up to the next level."

Its only about a year ago that Phantasy and Shodan hooked up (around at Frenzic's gaff by the way) and after a couple of studio sessions they came up with 'Atomic Age' (Easy). 'Gimme Da Gal' (which has so far shifted a very respectable 7000 units) is only their third or fourth release together, although they have plenty of stuff forthcoming. Making noise at the moment are their reworks of three classic tunes: all-time hardcore champion 'Living In Darkness', Dr S Gachet's jungle juice 'Remember The Roller' and Aphrodite's partytime jump-up winner 'Dub Moods'.

In particular 'Living In Darkness' out on Bassment has been getting plenty of love as Shodan explains, "It's been out three or four months on plate. Andy, Hype, Zinc and Blackmarket have all been bashing it. Zinc played it second tune at the Drum and Bass awards and because of the mad 4/4 bit in the middle they've all worked out clever mixes with it and even Skiba's worked out his little chat for it, which is great."

At the recent awards Shodan was up for best newcomer, which shows he has a big splash this year, he went up there and enjoyed himself but obviously didn't take it too seriously. "It was a good laugh," says Shodan. "I got there when they were announcing the best newcomer and I came last, tenth out of ten but its all good man, next year I might be ninth, ha ha!"

One thing they're both focussed on now is making Easy Records a label to look out for. Originally launched in the mid-90's by Phantasy, Easy made a respectable name for itself in the scene before seemingly going a bit quiet on the release front. Now after their recent success Phantasy has some big plans and he's got Shodan to help fulltime because he's jacking in his graphic design day job.

"We've just released a Distorted Minds remix of 'No Liars', which is doing well," says Phantasy, "then we've got a 12" coming out with the Ragga Twins called 'Illusions' / 'Lord 'O' Mercy.' Then we've got mixes of 'Remember The Roller' with Gachet following that. The release after that is a joint release between Easy & UK Apache's new label Nuttah Beats, which he's launching next year and I'm helping him out. Following that there will be the Generation Dub remix of 'How It Is' with a track from new signing Weva on the flip side."

When they mention Weva, both of them are full of praise. "He's making some bad tunes at the moment," says Shodan. "He's got some fucking serious bits, he's sending me so much stuff I'm getting confused to what to put out first," jokes Phantasy.

Building on the success of this year, they've plenty more things in store in 2005. Shodan says "The next big one for me and Phantasy with UK Apache is 'I Say, You Say' which is already getting a lot of play. We're keeping that one for Easy. If we keep giving all our best tunes to other people we're not gonna get the label back to where we want. I've also been working with Fatman D on Nu Breed's new label Biological Beats and I've got a solo LP planned. There's also a remix of Hype's 'Coming In Good' to look out for and a follow up to 'Gimme Da Gal' on Ganja." Label boss Phantasy also has some news on an album project. "There will be an album from us hitting the streets about April or May next year, I've spoken to D Bridge about doing something for it and people like Distorted Minds and Gen Dub. There's also a mix album which is coming out very very soon from the label under the Urbanthology series which is not just your normal boring mix. There's some 3 deck & 2 cd deck action going on in there. Check it out, you will be pleasantly surprised."

"I'm still looking for new artists," he continues. "Shodan's on board to help me find new talent and he's really good at that. With these kids that are coming through, if you don't show them any love they're gonna fuck off and do something else, then where's our scene gonna be with no new artists coming through?"

www.easyrecords.net
www.djphantasy.com
www.djshodan.com

words: Francesco Caccamo & MK1

ROOTS & FUTURE!

Many of you couldn't possibly have failed to notice a welcome return of the jungle sound to what is now known as drum&bass. Hang on… should that be the return of ragga vocals? Or reggae rhythms perhaps? Or maybe dub basslines? For the sake of argument, and this intro, let's just say the Jamaican sound. But wait a minute, has it returned or has it always been there, just not at the forefront of the scene, or has it simply been more subtle, not as 'in your face'? Bloody hell! As you can see, there's x-amount of confusion about this topic, not least of all among us journalists who have the delightful task of somehow writing about all this, documenting it for the history books, and trying to make you, the reader, understand exactly what's going on. It's because of this that we at ATM thought… why should we do it? So we're off on holiday to Jamaica for some more extensive background research! And, as a result, instead of boring you with our theories for three pages, we've decided to round up a formidable ensemble of jungle/drum&bass luminaries who are well known for their Kingstonian leanings (pardon the pun), each of whom will give you their version (and excuse that pun there too, sorry) of what the scene is experiencing at this particular moment in time: on what 'jungle' or the 'Jamaican sound' is, and whether it can even be classed as such; on why it disappeared; on whether it did disappear or simply became less prominent; on how and why it has come back to the fore; and on who have been the ambassadors of this sound. Let's hope they've got a clearer idea than we do…

SHY FX & T POWER

"As far as we're concerned it's jungle, straight up. There are a lot of kids out there now who are listening to this music and never really grew up on jungle. And for a long time the sound systems they've been hearing the music on weren't geared to taking jungle in its purest form anyway. They weren't capable of dealing with decent subby basslines. Systems got built for impact, but that encourages the sort of music whereby, after the initial impact, within thirty seconds you're bored. But now, with clubs like Fabric and systems like the Valve Sound System, etc, there are vehicles for the sound to be heard and felt like it should be. The b-line itself is always gonna be Jamaican/reggae influenced to an extent, because that's where the b-line came from originally. That's not to say this is 'black' music [adds T Power, and continues…]: this music has always been about unity. Jungle is multicultural, but for a long time the music has been far too white and far too middle class. However [Shy goes on…], what we're hearing now isn't jungle like it used to be considered, it's new skool jungle: the whole b-line skankin' thing together with a fusion of elements. We've discussed this with people like Potential and Dillinja. There was and is a conscious collective thought process to bring back the vibe, but it had to be done right. We're aiming for that skankin' thing! We're not all about that one impact double, triple drop business. We wanna get back to that vibe that makes you wanna grab a girl and dance. 'Murderation' was our first test. We didn't expect it to go down half as well as it did. We just wanted a stripped down bassline, and a proper skankin' tune. Even if it's not an obvious reggae bassline, it's got that skankin' some'ting. We're not concerned about making big drop bass tearouts. That's not to say we don't think it has its place, but there's a lot of good producers out there who seem to have consolidated themselves and they've got to a point where they think the music has to have a certain sound. It's been a process of osmosis, where people absorb off each other and they've kinda got lost along the way. Things have been getting louder and louder to the point you have to lose elements from a track and end up with no substance. We don't wanna stand in club where you have to wear earplugs all night. It's getting to the point where a lot of the stuff that's being made can't go any further. It's almost stopped sounding like drum&bass because there's something fundamentally missing: the soul, the vibe. There is room for everything though. Make whatever, as long as it has soul. Going back into the jungle thing reminds us of the vibe, of where we're coming from. Jungle doesn't have to have reggae to be jungle: the music just needs vibe. A lot of the music has become vibeless: simply a technical experiment. Music of late has just been an approximation of what drum&bass is about. You can just as easily blame producers such as ourselves because we didn't push it and that goes for everyone who shares the same background: we've all been very lazy. There are so many good producers out there who are capable of more than what they're doing now, and they know it. For those that came into it after '98 let's say, the sound they've grown up with is technical and dark. So they make that, and then other people get into it. We'd never negate anything such as production techniques but for us, a lot of the music had completely lost the vibe.

However, now you've got the likes of Potential coming back on board, and people like Terry T, Calibre, Digital, Rebel (MC), and Breakage, who is going in on authentic jungle. It's still early days but the scene is looking more positive. It's up to everyone really: producers, labels and distribution companies. We definitely want to give props to Rico from SRD [Southern Record Distribution]. He's encouraged the likes of Bukem, for example, and us to work together, to put our heads together and bring back the vibe. Rico is all about putting quality music out, music with longevity. If you take it way back, and consider tunes with longevity like 'We R le' by Lennie De Ice, you'll see that the fundamental elements were there, well before drum&bass became drum&bass, and people really partied because they liked the tunes. Now we would like to take drum&bass out of very generic arena without making it unplayable in a rave, using production techniques that have been learnt along the way, and introduce the vibe back into the scene."

MICKY FINN

"I think one of the people who's definitely bringing the sound back is Shy FX. He's always done what he's wanted to do and has never jumped on anybody else's train. He's always wanted to drive the train, if you know what I mean: take 'Bambaata' for example. He's always been fresh and groundbreaking. Shy's tunes always have a good groove and a thundering bassline - they really work - and he's been touching this little reggae thing again for a while now. His latest Top Cat thing ['Champion DJ' remix] has blown it really wide open: it's a very, very good remix! To do a remix of that tune is a task in itself as it's a big tune to remix. I'm glad really because it's like a breath of fresh air. Personally I like the dubby basslines. I come from those dubby basslines. I like the fusion, but you gotta get it right. There are a lot of powerful tracks out there and I like the blend of what's going on now. I don't like continually hearing just hard, analogue sounds, so I'm quite happy it's happened. It's a good turnaround. Apart from Shy, Digital's been doing his dubwise thing for quite a while as well. And it's these people who set the trends - the producers - not the labels or distribution companies. And then you get people who follow the trends, which is only natural. The same happens with all styles. Pendulum, for example, are setting trends right now with their sound, but the sad thing is when you hear people trying to do Pendulum's style - I mean, why? We've already got a Pendulum! The good thing is that this scene has no boundaries and one can take inspiration from anything and go anywhere with it. Now it's getting this little reggae influence back. '94 was a big year for jungle with that reggae influence and now, ten years later…"

Sitting in the car with Micky on his birthday, driving back from an old skool jungle gig he'd just been spinnin' at funnily enough, I dropped the fact I wanted to ask him some questions on this very subject. And I just so happened to have a Dictaphone stashed away… Ultimately I'm glad I did - the impromptu conversation revealed a fact that evoked a moment of nostalgia in the car. While we were talking from the 'decade on' angle it dawned on me we were exactly a decade on from a day that cemented itself in jungle history. 3rd December 2004 was the tenth anniversary of a significant curtain closure. A date marking the end of era - it was ten years ago, to the day, that jungle's seminal institution, AWOL, closed its doors at the Paradise Club in Islington!]

…"Yeah, bloody 'ell, yeah you're right, ten years ago today, my birthday! That was the last night of Paradise, then it closed… ten years ago mate… shit!"

KENNY KEN

"A lot of people think that jungle is just ragga jungle; jungle with ragga samples; if you go back to the day, jungle is clearly drum&bass with a bassline that simply isn't too modern. The basslines from back in the day were influenced by reggae but you don't have to have samples from reggae to make your tunes jungle. Jungle is just the way it was made."

HYPE

"For starters I'd like to know the difference between drum&bass and jungle. Can you tell me, because I certainly can't tell you? As far as I'm concerned it's the same thing, and it pisses my off when people try to split the scene by creating sub-genres. I've always played everything jungle/drum&bass, across the board. I can't stand the pigeonholing: people getting tagged, music getting labelled. It's all drum&bass or jungle - call it what you like but it's all the same thing. Half the people that like to think they play one certain style play it all anyway and it makes me laugh that guys taking certain influences now were the people who slagged it off a few years ago. People say a lot in interviews and kids think that's what they should be thinking. I prefer to leave people to make up their own minds. I'll always say don't settle on a style or simply stick with trends but be original and diverse. But now there is a bit of everything in the music and there is a wide range of producers making different styles. It's one big melting pot of culturally influenced music. There was a time when some producers took a lot of the things I personally like out of the music. A lot of music was really stripped down, but it's now coming back as a melting pot. Now you've got Calibre, for example, doing his soulful dub thing, as he basically always has done. He's using a formula that's drawn a lot of people across, influencing another group of listeners. You've got someone like Potential bringing in a big reggae influence, and Shy doing some serious ragga business. I'm personally glad people have brought back these influences. A hell of a lot of people like reggae and it's big; big like hip-hop. Jungle/drum&bass is, always has been and always will be influenced by other music. I play anything and everything if it's good in my opinion, from Makoto's 'Golden Girl' for example, to Shy's latest ragga extravaganza, to Fresh's stuff. There's a big improvement in production and quality control with the advancement of technology. But even though the quality of production is better, song writing is still song writing. A good tune is a good tune. Potential's 'You're Mine' for example, is just a good song, which is why people have embraced it. Signing Potential was an honour for me! Jungle/drum&bass history doesn't always get written right in my opinion. I mean 'Lets Go' was groundbreaking [circa '93] and I can be quite a nostalgic person. So it was my personal mission for me to bring him back. I just told him to do what he does best. It only takes one good tune to bring you through and make people recognise you. It's all about good music and leaving that labelling thing alone!"

POTENTIAL BADBOY

"I took some time out from doing jungle but I've been doing other stuff, like garage for example. For me, there was a point when raves started to lose the girls, and at the same time losing the vibe. Now there's a positive vibe again, and with a little

roots and future

encouragement from Shy FX, Dillinja and Hype, I personally got that vibe back too. There's a lot of remixes going on at the moment so from that point of view you could say there is a revival taking place, but for me, the same sound has pretty much been there since the beginning, whether it's hard, dirty, tribal; whether it's jungle, drum&bass, whatever the street wants to call it. If the street wants to call it jungle then so be it: division is stupid! All the influences have always been there in one form or another. And if it catches a vibe at the time then run with it, which is what has happened for me. On the other hand, it's natural for people to get bored of stuff, which is why things do move in cycles. The Jamaican influence is obviously working with the crowds now. Not everyone should be jumping on it though, not everyone will, and not everyone will be able to. I don't think there'll be a flood because there's good quality control now. From a production point of view, this music has a formula and every producer has to learn the formula. It's not easy for people to simply jump on the bandwagon without having some idea of how to work a good tune. Also, technology has changed a lot. The digital method has taken a big weight off the shoulders. OK, so music is a little more technical now, but that's positive too, as long as the vibe is there. For me the music needed time to develop technically, which is why things got stripped down and literally more technical. Some producers create a story in their music through technology, while some people don't understand music like that. Take 'You're Mine' for example: for me, keeping it simple from beginning to end means someone into R&B, perhaps, can appreciate it. The advances in technology just make the sound better, but the vibe is the most important thing."

CALIBRE

"I'm not being pretentious here but I'm honestly not bothered whether people want to call this drum&bass, jungle, the return of jungle, a revival, dub drum&bass, the Jamaican influence, reggae, ska, dub or whatever. People will call it what they want, but for me it's simply part of the cycle of music. Before reggae there was ska: my dad took me to see Madness, then UB40. The reggae thing influenced me then. There's a big line you can chase with reggae coming all the way to drum&bass now, a big loop that influenced many genres. Not many people can say they haven't been influenced by reggae. It was through drum&bass that I started listening to reggae properly. I was always into King Tubby and Fabio introduced me to the Scientists' sound. You can gauge the essential difference between dub and reggae when you listen to Tubby and the Scientists. On a simple level dub basically takes the vocals out of reggae. Looking deeper, the mix down and arrangement are different. The essence is about getting drums right and the bass, particularly with dub. From a reggae point of view, applied to drum&bass, it's taking something melancholic and working into the dancefloor. The first album I did used reggae samples. I think drum&bass artists have a reggae understanding and originally jungle is all sample based. Reggae-influenced drum&bass is music you can see working no matter what, and it's just coming around again. When there was a negative stigma surrounding reggae influenced drum&bass/jungle/whatever you want to call it, the electronic music scene was in its early stages. Negative elements come in across the board with all genres: you're always gonna get your gangsters using music to get other things. Now I think we're past that and reach out to people on different level: we understand it better. I would say today's fusion is more for the purist. It has a more organic feel this time round, spurred by a dub/reggae mentality. Reggae is perfect for sparking a joint too, or drinking a pint of Guiness. I've personally reinvented myself a few times, but now I can show my appreciation, homage and love for reggae because I have a medium that I can apply it to. Basically I get to take elements and ideas from music I love and represent them on the dancefloor. I'm also really feeling what Breakage and Digital are doing. Digital is and has been a big influence for me and is very underrated in my opinion. Breakage is doing his own thing too, bringing a real dub flavour. And Amit is taking it to another place through dub influence and a difference in beats. But you can hear the excitement in all of their tracks. You can tell the producer is getting a buzz off what he's doing. Distribution companies and labels might have some weight in setting these trends, but the best things in life aren't predetermined, not cynically anyway, i.e. records sales from a music point of view. Most of time they just end up in your lap before you even realise. I'd definitely suggest people having a read of 'Bass Culture' by Lloyd Bradley. He's visited the artists, spent real time amongst the culture and dealing with the origins of bass: the whole history. I found it valuable. Some might not, but I did.

DIGITAL

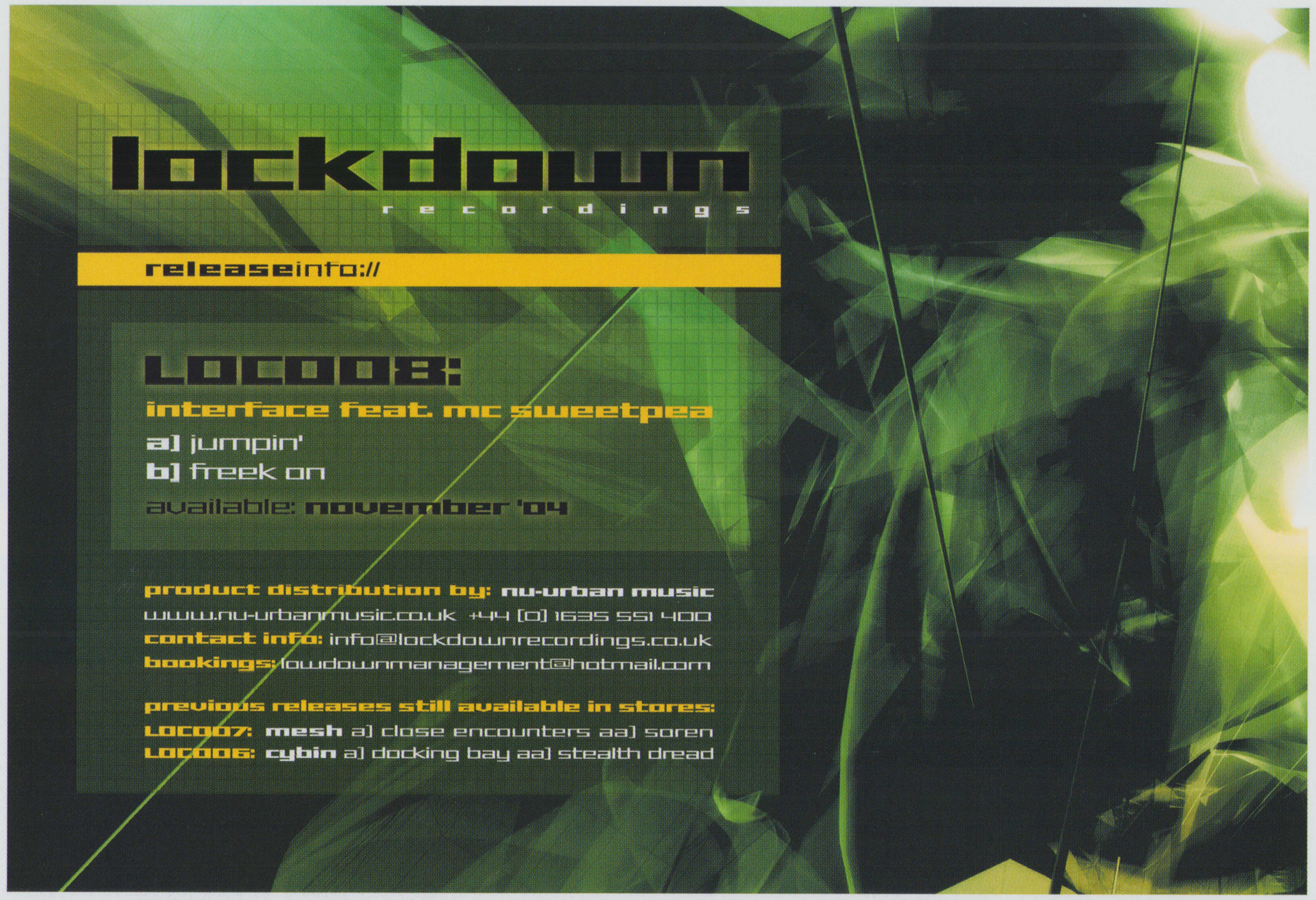
"I consider it a reggae influence overall, more than dub as such. I think the word 'reggae' covers it better. I generally regard dub as more spaced out with more effects, less vocals and perhaps more instrumental. The jungle drum&bass that's being made, and that I make, is more reggae b-lines with a one-drop rhythm. And basically that's all I know coming from a reggae background and that's what comes naturally to me. I produce music with a reggae mindset and that's what it was all about when I got into it. Things do go in cycles though, but when that reggae feeling goes out of drum&bass for a long time it definitely gets missed. People have missed it and it needs to breath again. My personal production career is a good example of the way cycles work. I might have big tunes here and there but I don't follow trends, I just do what I do and then there's a time when it works for a lot of people. Originally, a lot of people, especially the foundation people that got into jungle/drum&bass in the first place, got into it because of that soulful feeling created by the reggae flavour. I wouldn't want it to be just reggae jungle though. You need the entire spectrum. Just like I want a DJ to represent the whole thing. That's why Hype does well because he plays everything. When I'm playing jungle/drum&bass, I play across the board. I'm playing jungle/drum&bass as opposed to playing soul for example, but I play all flavours of jungle/drum&bass. Trouble at dances and technology took us away from a jungle mindset as such. Technology meant people started making music and making a certain sound because they could. People started dropping samples out of tracks and experimenting with equipment as the equipment advanced. But the scene was at it's most buzzing when it was sampling all kinds of music: jazz, reggae, soul, disco, etc. The mad techy vibe brought a lot of men into the club. When I did tracks with people like Spirit I was doing more techy, dubby stuff. If you chuck some vocals in there you get the girls in. If you then throw a reggae vibe in you get a different element: it has a broad appeal. Calibre has stuck to guns with this reggae vibe. I'm a big Potential fan too, especially his old stuff, and what I've heard of his new things for that matter. Then you've got that real dubby vibe from Amit. There's been a lot of development and a lot has been learnt in the last ten years. We need the cycles and we need to learn from our mistakes and progress. This reggae feel is the result of that and it's a positive thing. For starters, today's music isn't as gangster as before: it's more chilled out with lots of vibe. And besides, the world is different now. At the end of the day I'm an old raver and I've always loved those big, phat, heavy and techy b-lines. Add my reggae background into the equation and you can understand why I feel good about it."

BREAKAGE

"I'd say reggae, and especially dub has been a huge influence on drum&bass because that's what dub is: drums and bass. It's a simplified musical version of the original riddim track, but with more emphasis on the beats and bass. It obviously has music, but further employs the technological element with echo chambers, filters and tape delays, and when you break it down like that, there's not much difference between dub and what drum&bass was, is and will be. In terms of what's happening now being a revival, I'd say it is and it isn't. It is because there's a lot more of it as opposed to a few years ago and more people are in it, while before I'd get funny looks for playing certain types of tune. The turning point for me was hearing Storm play Digital's 'Ras 78' at Metalheadz at Limelight. I thought that was a deep tune and everyone was going mad about it. That track was the first in ages to make the hair on my arms stand on end, and it gave me the confidence to give out my dubby tunes. I'd always been making that type of tune, but people didn't want to sign them. However, I knew from then that I could start giving them out. Digital really opened the door back up on the dub side of things. We've spoken about it before, and I literally said to him, 'I don't know what you did, but now people like me can put out stuff that I like and not worry about it'. Now, with it coming back to the fore, people are loving the dub/reggae style. Another important person for me is Rohan from Bassbin. We were speaking on the phone after I'd given him a chilled out thing called 'Mother Nature' and asked if I could send him a few reggae influenced tracks. He was in it as reggae is his favourite type of music, and now he's signed lots of my reggae-influenced tracks [the massive 'So Vain' being a prime example]. To go back to the original point, at the same time, it isn't necessarily a revival, because there are certain people like Digital, Calibre, Amit and others who never really stopped doing dubby tunes. And I'm sure when people start getting tired of the dub thing, there will still be people like myself, Digital, Calibre, Amit and Equinox, together with the likes of Shy and Potential, who will be doing our thing. Whereas others who might have made a track with a dub sample won't be doing that anymore because the trend would have passed, and they'll be doing something else. At the moment, I think everyone's going deeper in terms of vibe and sound. People are more concentrated on depth in the music rather than impact, but always within the drum&bass boundaries, sort of like what Bukem used to do: slightly more refined. Yet those tunes still made you dance like crazy."

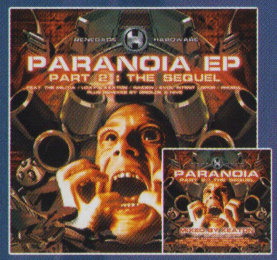
On that note, we wrap up our discussion on the so-called 'return to the jungle'. Hopefully this series of mini-interviews (and there could've been more) has helped you to understand the standpoint from within the scene: from some of the people who have played and are playing a fundamental role in pushing this sound. And I reckon you'll agree with us in thinking that despite one or two differing points of view in terms of what the sound should be called and what kind of an influence it actually is, the emphasis by all the artists involved is on the vibe and on the music… and it is these two aspects, above word choice and trends, which are the most important aspects of our scene. Long live the natty dread!

Next issue we'll be attacking this subject from an MC's point of view. Many jungle/drum&bass emcees such as the Ragga Twins, 5ive-0, Moose, Navigator, GQ and Fats come from a sound system/toasting in the dancehall grounding. They took the reggae blues/dance mentality and placed it firmly into what became jungle. And in all honesty, they didn't have to change what they were doing. Listen to tapes with the Ragga Twins, Navi and Co-Gee for example, and they could just as easily be in a ragga dance as a D&B rave. 'Til next time then, let the debate and music go on.



FUTURE RELEASES

RENEGADE HARDWARE



RH62 - OUT NOW

PARANOIA EP VOL.2
A- PARANOIA (GRIDLOK RMX) - MILITIA
B- CLONE - RAIDEN
C- HATERS (HIVE RMX) - LOXY & KEATON
D- OUTBROKEN (THAT TRACK) - SPOR
E- THE BLOOD - EVOL INTENT
F- POSITIVE VIBES - PHOBIA

RH62CD
PARANOIA VOL.2 CD
MIXED BY KEATON
FEAT. 17 EXCLUSIVE TRACKS

RH63
RELEASED 10TH JAN 05

HARDWARE CHRONICLES PART 4

A - SHADOWS
UNKNOWN ERROR
B - FALL DOWN - SKITTY
C - HAYWIRE - SPOR
D - FIFTY SOUTH
BULLETPROOF

RH64
RELEASED 7TH FEB 05

RAW & REAL EP
MANIFEST

A - RAW & REAL
B - I DON'T GIVE A F@*K'
MANIFEST & KEATON
C - O.G. RETURNS
(MIRACLE RMX)
D - KILLER INSTINCT

TROUBLE ON VINYL

TOV67
OUT NOW

HERE COMES TROUBLE VOL. 12

A) HARD FOCUS - HOLD TIGHT & EBK
B) DAYWALKER - CYBIN
C) INSECTACIDE - SPOR
D) GOING OUT OF MY MIND - LYNX & FATAL

TOV68
RELEASED 31ST JAN 05

FAST LANE 2
LP SAMPLER

PROBE & SYLO

A) DRUMZ LIKE THIS
B) RHYTHMIC CULTURE

TOVLP06
RELEASED 28TH FEB 05

FAST LANE 2 LP

4 PIECE LP WITH ARTISTS: BARON, SPOR, DISTORTED MINDZ, GENERATION DUB, HEIST & ED FUNK, BROCKIE, FRICTION, SIMON BASSLINE SMITH & DRUMSOUND + MORE.

TOVLP06CD
FAST LANE 2 CD
MIXED BY DJ FRICTION

RENEGADE RECORDINGS

RR55
OUT NOW

CAM

A) SUMMETIME BLUEZ
B) ANYTHING

RR56
RELEASED 27TH DEC

RENEGADE ROLLERS VOL. 5

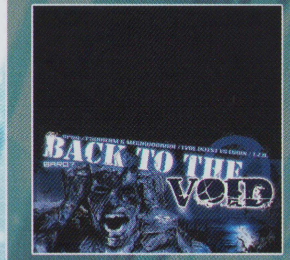
A) FEEL LIKE JAMMIN' - HOLDTIGHT
B) TODAY MY LOVE - BASIC OPERATIONS
C) RIGHT THERE - CRESCENT
D) LOVIN' ME
DAVIDE CARBONE & KUBIKS

RR57
RELEASED 31ST JAN 05

BASIC OPERATIONS

A) SOUND KILLAH
B) BRING LOVE

barcode



BAR07
RELEASED 17TH JAN 05

BACK TO THE VOID EP

A) DANTE'S INFERNO - SPOR
B) PRESSURE POINT - PSIDREAM & MECHWARRIOR
C) HEADCASE - EWUN & EVOL INTENT
D) MAN OF WAR - T.Z.A

BAR08
RELEASED FEB 05

SPOR

A) HAUNT ME
B) BRICKBEATS

BAR09
RELEASED MAR 05

EWUN

A) FACE OFF
B) INTERSTELLAR

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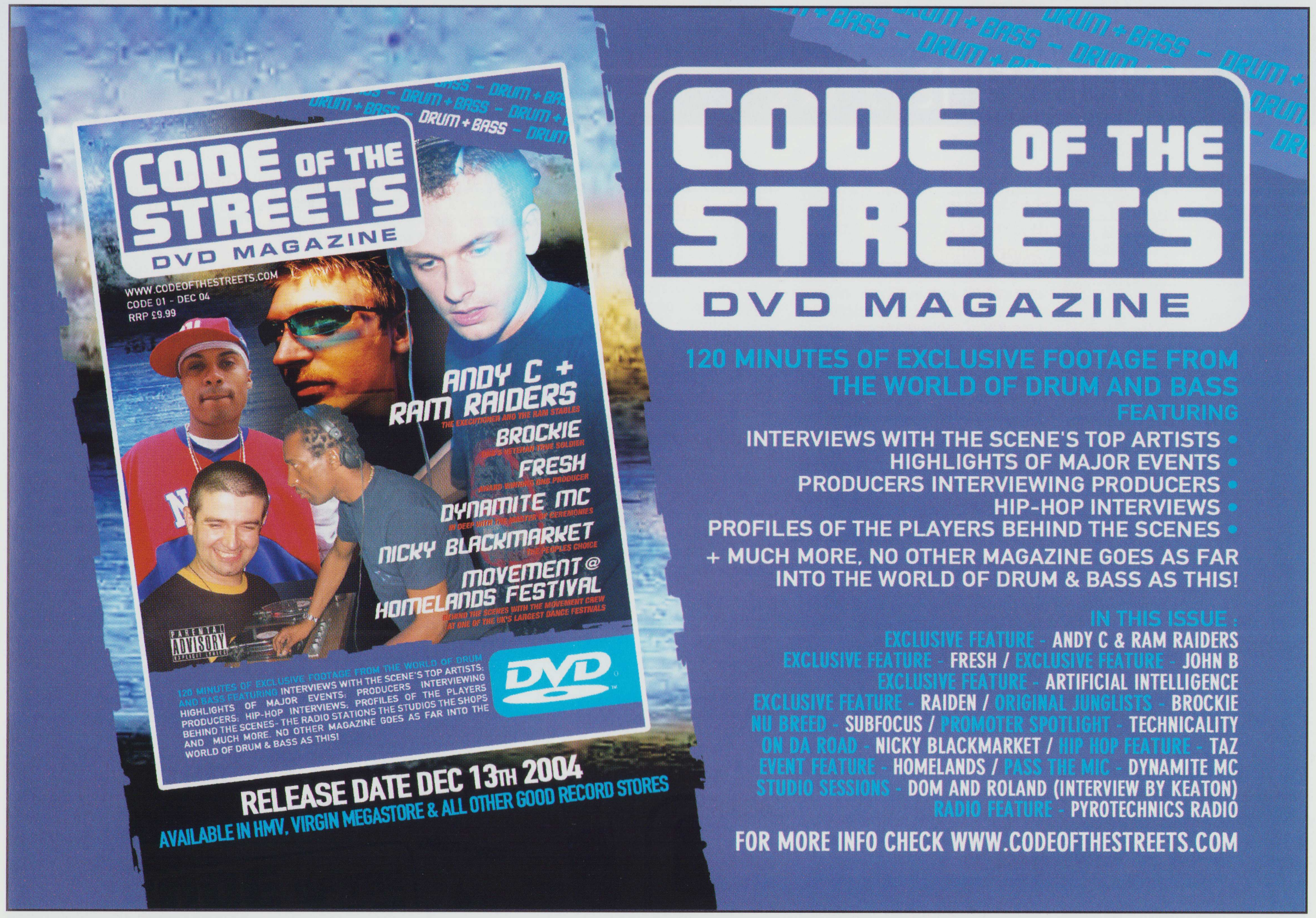
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EXCLUSIVE FEATURE - FRESH / EXCLUSIVE FEATURE - JOHN B
EXCLUSIVE FEATURE - ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
EXCLUSIVE FEATURE - RAIDEN / ORIGINAL JUNGLISTS - BROCKIE
NU BREED - SUBFOCUS / PROMOTER SPOTLIGHT - TECHNICALITY
ON DA ROAD - NICKY BLACKMARKET / HIP HOP FEATURE - TAZ
EVENT FEATURE - HOMELANDS / PASS THE MIC - DYNAMITE MC
STUDIO SESSIONS - DOM AND ROLAND (INTERVIEW BY KEATON)
RADIO FEATURE - PYROTECHNICS RADIO
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>mosaic
Freq: Monthly Tues. Venue: Bar Academy, N1 Centre, 16 Parkfield St. Islington, London N1. Time: 10:30-2am. Cost: £5 / £4 NUS. Info: mosaicdnb.com. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 18/01/05 - TBC. 15/02 - TBC.

>swerve
Freq: Every Wed. Venue: The Lounge Bar, The End, West Central Street, London. Time: 10.30-3am. Cost: £5. Info: 0207 419 9199. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 15/12 - Fabio + guests. 22/12 - Fabio + guests. 29/12 - Fabio + guests.

>dig deep
Freq: Fortnightly Wednesdays. Venue: Dojo Lounge, Park Row, Bristol. Time: 10-2am. Cost: £4. Music Policy: D&B, Soulful House, Future Soul, Hip Hop. Info: www.intrigue.org.uk. DJs: The Insiders plus guests. 22/12 - Friction, MC SP.

>adrenalin
Freq: Every Wed. Venue: Bar Lorca, 261 Brixton Road, London. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £3. Info: 07770 601731. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Ashatak, Kwest, Solid Industry, Haste, Nebulus, Fader, Cabbie, Panic, Manga, MC Fun, Kraft, TT Ace, DVS.

>movement
Freq: Every Thurs. Venue: Bar Rumba, 36 Shaftesbury Avenue, London. Time: 8-3.30am. Cost: £6. Info: +44(0)207 7735 7577. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 16/12 - Bryan Gee, Adam F, Ray Keith, Stealth. 23/12 - Bryan Gee, Ed Rush, Ruffstuff, Addiction, Ill Logic & Raf. 30/12 - Bryan Gee, Zinc, Ray Keith, Utah Jazz. 06/01/05 - Line UP TBC. 13/01 - Bryan Gee, Swift, Suv, Breakage. 20/01 - Bryan Gee, Goldie (TBC), Addiction, Chris Intaface. 27/01 - Bryan Gee, Clipz, Ruffstuff, Jubbz.

>uncertified
Freq: Monthly Thurs. Venue: GnC's, Hale Leys, Aylesbury, Bucks. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £5. Info: 07966 429333. DJs: 23/12 - Storm, Madcap, Wilsh, Dubplate, Ascension, MC LowQui, MC Wrekka. 27/01/05 - Equinox & Senses, Wilsh, Dubplate, Madcap, Ascension, MC Wrekka. 24/02 - Digital, Dubplate, Wilsh, Ascension, Madcap, MC Wrekka.

>new nation
Freq: Monthly Thurs. Venue: The Station, Chertsey Rd, Woking, Surrey. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £5. Info: venue. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 06/01 - Nicky Blk Mkt, Fluid, Em-Tek, Tomi Kain, Network, MC Shabba, Fearless, Fatman D, Joker. 03/02 - Ruffstuff, Devious D & Jack-Knife & 5ive O, MC Skibadee, Eksman, Kasha, Remino.

>suburban noize
Freq: Every Thurs. Venue: Mass, St Matthews Church, Brixton Hill, London. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £5. Info: www.mass-club.com. DJs: inc Probe, Filthy Dirty Rich, Fabio, Grooverider, Mampi Swift, Nicky Blk Mkt and more. 23/12 - Andy C & Randall, Probe, Bad Company UK, Pendulum, Shimon, The Upbeats, GQ, Verse and more.

>dogma
Freq: 2nd Thurs of month. Venue: Dogma, Byard Lane, Nottingham. Time: 10-2am. Cost: £4. Info: 07957 545317. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 13/01/05 - Fabio, P-Fine. 10/02 - Bryan Gee, Priceless, MC Maveric.

fridays

>cocoshebeen
Freq: Every Fri. Venue: Room 2, The Opera House, 570 Christchurch Rd, Boscombe, Bournemouth. Time: 9-3am. Cost: £10. Info: 01202 399922. Music Policy: Trance / D&B. 17/12 - Orbit, Element, Carlos, Mario, MC Sky, MC Baker. 26/12 - Andy C, Mampi Swift, Baron, MC Fatman D, MC Junior Red, Orbit, Carlos, MC Sky. 07/01 - Bailey. 14/01 - Nicky Blackmarket. 21/01 - J Majik & Wickaman. 28/01 - Mampi Swift.

>fabric live
Freq: Every Friday. Venue: Fabric, 77a Charterhouse St, London EC1. Time: 9.30-5am. Cost: £12. Info: tickets: 0870 902 0001. Music Policy: D&B, Hip-Hop, Breaks. DJs: 17/12 - Jacques Lu Cont, Mylo, Jo Jo De Freq, Andy C, Grooverider, DJ Hype, Friction, Storm, High Contrast, MCs Eksman & MC 2 Shy, DJ Yoda & Dan Greenpeace, Skitz & Rodney P, Vinyl Dialect. 29/12 (Wed) - DJ Hype (2hr Set), DJ Zinc, Pascal, Randall, Bryan Gee, MC Skibadee, Rage, Fats & AD. Nicky Blackmarket, Brockie, Loxy & Ink, Darren Jay, Ash, Funky Flirt, MCs Foxy, Flux & 5ive 0, Rat Pack, Phantasy, Dr. S Gachet, Rhythm Doctor, MC Moose.

>decode
Freq: 2nd Fri of Month. Venue: Aura, 2 Church Sq, Taunton, Somerset. Time: 9-4am. Cost: £6.50. Info: aura-club@aol.com. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 14/01/05 - Shimon, Red One, MC Juiceman, MC Wrec. 11/02 - Nicky Blk Mkt & Kenny Ken, MC Juiceman. Plus Deep, Mr Nice, J Liquid, Sammy D, Parker.

>metropolis
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: Phoenix, Oxford Road, M'cr. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £7. Info: 07770 601731. DJs: 04/02 - Bryan G (TBC), Ray Keith, Aquasky, Mark OD & Prophecy.

>traffic
Freq: 2nd Friday of every month. Venue: The Rhythm Factory, 16-18 Whitechapel Rd, London. Time: 10-5am. Cost: £7. Music Policy: D&B. Info: 07939 436291. DJs: 10/12: Storm, Randall, Nu:Tone, Logistics, Commix, DM C.U.T, Danny Exile, MC Shylo, MC LowQui. MC System, I-One + guest tbc.

>interface
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: The Gatehouse, Derby. Time: 9-3am. Cost: £5. Info: venue. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 07/01/05 - Simon Bassline Smith, Drumsound, Youngman, MC Biggie, Majika. 04/02 - Brockie (tbc), Kenny Ken) (tbc), MC Skibadee (tbc). Simon Bassline Smith Drumsound, Youngman, MC Biggie, Majika. 05/03 - Pendulum, MC Shabba, Simon Bassline Smith, Drumsound, Youngman, MC Biggie, Majika.

>bio-rhythm
Freq: Monthly Fri. Venue: The Honeycomb, Edinburgh. Time: 11pm - 3am. Cost: £8. Info: 07887 676061. Music Policy: Tech Funk, Breaks & Beats. DJs: 10/12 - Erol Alkan, The Merry Pranksters, Believe & Silver Stonc

>switch-up!
Freq: Weekly Fri. Venue: Oxygen, Edinburgh. Time: 8-1am. Cost: Free. Info: 07887 676061. Music Policy: D&B, Breaks, Beats. DJs: G-Mac (Manga) & regular guests.

>manga
Freq: Monthly Fri. Venue: The Honeycomb, Edinburgh. Time: 10.30-3am. Cost: £9. Info: +44(0)7887 676061. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. DJs: 30/12 - G-Mac, DJ Kid, MC Sonny, Believe, Silver Storic + guests TBC. 28/01/05 - 9th B'day. DJ Zinc & MC Foxy. 25/02 - Mampi Swift & MC IC3.

>intrigue
Freq: 3rd Friday of every month. Venue: Arc, Broad St, Bristol. Time: 9-2.30am. Cost: £5. Info: www.intrigue.org.uk. Music Policy: D&B, Hip Hop & Future Soul. DJs: 17/12 - Makoto, Matrix, Artificial Intelligence, The Insiders, MC SP, MC Deeizm. 21/01/05 - Bryan Gee, Logistics, Holdtight, The Insiders, MC System. 18/02 - Fabio + more TBC.

>hospitality
Freq: 3rd Friday of every month. Venue: Herbal, 12 Kingsland Rd, London E2. Time: 9-3am. Cost: £7. Info: 0208 613 0400. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 17/12 - Friction, Logistics, Murdock, Tomahawk, Stamina MC, Landslide, Chris Goss. 21/01/05 - London Elektricity, Cyantific, Kasra, MC Wrec, Nicky Blk Mkt, Chris Goss. 18/2 - High Contrast, Nu:Tone, London Elektricity, Tomahawk, SP MC, Chris Goss.

saturdays

>faster
Freq: Every Sat. Venue: Carling Academy, N1 Centre, 16 Parkfield St, Islington, London N1. Time: 10-4am. Cost: £10. Info: 07957 285 891. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 18/12 - Shy FX, Artificial Intelligence, Friction, Die, SP MC, MC Eksman, MC IC3. Jan & Feb inc Hype, Swift, Friction, Zinc, Probe, Bryan Gee, Ruffstuff, Shy FX, Marcus Intalex, Andy C, MC Skibadee, Dynamite, 2Shy, IC3, Five Alive.

>refuge
Freq: Every Sat. Venue: Metropolitan, 11 Eden Quay, Dublin 2, Ireland. Time: 11-late. Cost: 10/5Euros. Info: +35316167020. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 04/12 - Rohan. 18/12 - Digital, MC Stitch, Daddy K, Konchus Lingo.

>breakneck
Freq: Last Sat of Month. Venue: South Parade Pier, South Parade, Portsmouth. Time: 9-4am. Cost: £10. Info: 02392 732283. Music Policy: D&B, Hip-Hop. DJs: 26/12 - Grooverider, MC 2Shy, SDM Vs Triple M, Charge, Sayber, MC Gibber, MC Master X. 28/01 - Randall, MC GQ, SDM, Triple M, Charge, Gibber, Sparkee. 25/02 - Andy C, MC 2Shy, SDM, Triple M, Charge, Gibber.

>industry artists
Freq: 2nd Sat of Month. Venue: The Attic, Oxford Rd, Manchester. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £5. Info: 07770 601731. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 11/12 - DJ Deval b2b Prophecy, Sonar, B52, Hab and The Captain. 08/01/05 - APB, Impact, Prophecy, Deval and Roscoe. 12/02 - Sappo, Deval, Xample & Sol, Dime.

>velocity
Freq: Third Sat of Month. Venue: Love Bar, Corner of Shoreditch High St & Calvert Ave, London, EC2. Time: 8-late. Cost: £5. Info: 07932 962 913. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Romay, J Laze, Laroque, Kymera, Nookie, Intense, Ram, MC Remo, Special MC.

>club destiny
Freq: Every Sat. Venue: Club Destiny, Old Christchurch Rd, Bournemouth. Time: 9-3am. Cost: £5. Info: 01202 467486. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Various guests inc Mickey Finn, Grooverider, Frenzic, Skibadee, Shabba, Fluid, plus Deep, Dark Dean, Vespa, Korrupt and more.

one offs

>essence of chi xmas
Date: Wed 15th Dec. Venue: Plan B, 418 Brixton Road, Brixton, London. Time: 8-2am. Cost: £5. Info: 07817 706484. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Kane & T1, Nookie, Zero Tolerance, DM CUT & Danny Exile, Repercussion DJ's, hEaling Crew, Stamina MC, MC LowQui, MC Five Alive, MC Ken Mac, MC System, MC I-One.

>subfunk
Date: Fri 17th Dec. Venue: Club Hev'n & Hell (formerly club 24/7), Fleet St, Liverpool. Time: 10-2.30am. Cost: £6. Info: www.subfunk.co.uk. Music Policy: Breaks, Beats. DJs: Badboy, Rekordbreaker, Entity, AKA, Johnny 1 Move, Dogs Pocket Vs Electrosluts, Gooseman, Vext, Mr Psik and more.

>soul:ution
Date: 17th Dec. Venue: Band on the Wall, 25 Swan Street, Manchester. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £7. Info: 0161 7185283. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Randall, Marcus Intalex, Calibre, ST Files, Catalyst & MC DRS.

>ram
Date: Fri 17th Dec. Venue: The End, West Central Street, London. Time: 9.30-6am. Cost: £13. Info: 0207 419 9199. Music Policy: D&B, Various. DJs: Red One, Andy C, Moving Fusion, Shimon and special guests.

>movement reunion
Date: Sat 18th Dec. Venue: The Mass, St Matthews Church, Brixton Hill. Time: 9-6am. Cost: £15. Info: 0207 7735 7577. Music Policy: D&B, Liquid, Old Skool. DJs: Bryan Gee, Andy C, Ray Keith, Friction, Jumpin' Jack Frost, Nicky Blackmarket, Ruffstuff, Addiction, Chris Intaface, Stealth, Marcus Intalex, Peshay, Artificial Intelligence, Flight, Commix, Ratpack, Stamina MC, MC Foxy, MC IC3, MC Moose, MC Darrison, MC Verse, MC Fats + more tbc.

>metalheadz xmas party
Date: Fri 24th Dec. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Road, Shoreditch, London. Time: 8-3am. Cost: £7. Info: 07974 904945. Music Policy: D&B, Broken Beat, House, Funk, Hip Hop, Soul. DJs: Goldie, Storm, Loxy, Randall, Flight, Calyx, Clarky, Freebase & more artists TBC.

>jungle addiction 7
Date: Fri 24th Dec. Venue: G's Bar Abingdon, Abingdon Town FC, Culham Rd, Abingdon, Oxfordshire. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £5. Info: 07796 484814. Music Policy: Jungle/D&B. DJs: Sneaky, Streaker + Guests (TBC), residents MCs + guests (TBC).

>mc convention
Date: Sat 25th Dec. Venue: The Mass, St Matthews Church, Brixton Hill. Time: 10-6am. Cost: £25. Info: 07956 363 635. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Brockie, Nicky Blk Mkt, Jumping Jack Frost, Ruffstuff, Profile, Phantasy, 5ive O, Funky Flirt, Ash A Tak, Ray Keith, Miss Pink. MC Shabba, Skibadee, Det, Fearless, IC3, Cowboy Ranger, Yardie, Fun, Junglist, Curse, Fever, J Swif, Shockin, Flexa, G Power.

>innovation
Date: Sun 26th Dec. Venue: Ministry Of Sound, 103 Gaunt Street, London SE1. Time: 9.30-6am. Cost: £24. Info: 07958 771887. Music Policy: Micky Finn, Hype, Mampi Swift, Nicky Blk Mkt, Pendulum, Shy FX, Shimon, Friction, Modified Motion, Kenny Ken, Darren Jay, Devious D, DJ KG, Em-Tek, Snypa, Jack-Nife, Demolition Cru, Uplift, Skie, Outlaw, Bones, Zykotik. MC Skibadee, Shabba D, Det, Fearless, GQ, Foxy, Fun, Sugars, Moose, 5ive-0, Joker D, Mystery.

>in motion
Date: Mon 27th Dec. Venue: Hobsons Choice, Banbury. Time: 8-3am. Cost: £0. Info: info@beatsinmotion.co.uk. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Reaction, Samas, Caution, Freeze, Lockie, Sloss and more.

>the full circumference
Date: Wed 29th Dec. Venue: Herbal, Shoreditch, London EC2. Time: 9-3am. Cost: £7. Info: 0207 613 4462. Music Policy: D&B, Breaks. DJs: Bryan Gee, Sub Focus, Hayze, Unix, Kontact, Fat Cat, MC Eksman, SP MC, Indica.

>heaver
Date: Sat 1st Jan. Venue: Heaven, Charing Cross, Villiers St, London, WC2N. Time: 9.30-6am. Cost: £18. Info: 07956 401 509. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Hype w/ Foxy & Eksman, Zinc w/ Dynamite & Skibadee, Bryan Gee w/ IC3 & Shockin', Brockie w/ Det & Fearless, Ruff stuff w/ Shabba & Fun, Nicky Blk Mkt, Devious D & flirt w/ Ragga Twins. Plus Kool Hit Squad & New Nation Arena's.

>metalheadz 10th b'day
Date: Fri 7th Jan. Venue: Temple Bar Music Centre, Temple Bar, Dublin 2, Ireland. Time: 11-late. Cost: 15 Euros. Info: +353 16167020. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Goldie, Rohan, MC Low Qui.

>essence of old skool
Date: Wed 19th Jan 05. Venue: Plan B, 418 Brixton Road, Brixton, London. Time: 8-2am. Cost: £5. Info: 07817 706484. Music Policy: Old Skool. DJs: DJ Kane, Madcap, Wilsh, Outlaw & Wise, T1, Healing Crew, MC IC3, MC LowQui, MC Ken Mac.

>innerground
Date: Fri 21st Jan. Venue: The End, West Central Street, London. Time: 9.30-6am. Cost: £13. Info: 0207 419 9199. Music Policy: D&B, Various. DJs: Marky and special guests.

>turbulence
Date: Sat 22nd Jan. Venue: Newcastle University Students Union. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £9.50. Info: 0191 261 2606. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. DJs: Valve Sound: Dillinja, Lemon D, Friction, Craggs & Parallel Forces, Phobia, Piper. Jon the Teacher, Flab.

>detonate - ram recs
Date: Fri 28th Jan. Venue: Stealth, Masonic Place, Nottingham. Time: 10-3.30am. Cost: £10. Info: 07957 545317. Music Policy: D&B, Hip-Hop, Breaks. DJs: Andy C, Moving Fusion, Sub Focus, Transit Mafia, Steppa, MC Foxy, MC E-LL. Blak Twang, Tommy Evans, DJ Blakey, Mic, Assasin, Santero, Detail, Breakers. Fingathing (live), Oris Jay & P-Fine, Richie G & Martin K9, Problem Child.

>bassix
Date: Fri 4th Feb 05. Venue: Enigma Nightclub, Regent St, Cheltenham.

Back to Speed - Friday 12th November. The End, London

Speed has become a term that is used not only to describe the legendary club night which took place at the Mars bar in the early 90's but which also encapsulates a whole sound and movement in D&B history. So when I heard that Good Looking were planning a Speed revival night, I was struck by nostalgic excitement and slight apprehension at whether it would work. Speed was in its heyday at a time when drum & bass was still developing and was still a relatively underground thing, with the likes of Bukem, Fabio, DJ Lee, Doc Scott and co. bringing us so-called "intelligent" beats and pioneering the more jazz-tinged side of jungle. When I arrived at The End the other night, the queue was round the block and as soon as I got inside there was a distinctly different vibe to the usual D&B affair down there. Getting through the doors I could hear Conrad's inimitable vocals booming over the familiar sounds of yesteryear, and the buzz was clearly on everyone's faces. I caught the end of DJ Ink's set, bringing back memories of the early Architex sound and next up was Bukem, who's sets epitomised the Speed experience for many. Rollin out tracks like PFM's "One & Only", his own "Horizons", Skanna's "Sorrow" (and my personal fav) Shogun's "Nautilus" we were transported straight back in time, and it was good to see a crowd who genuinely remembered all of those tunes that shaped the sound. MC Conrad hosted the night like it should be done, reverting to the raw, energy-fuelled lyricism that he made his name with, spitting familiar rhymes from the early Progression Sessions days. Bukem managed to adapt with ease to the different pace and structure of those mid-nineties beats, chopping and blending seamlessly as usual. Fabio stepped up when the place was in full-swing, and dropped "Atlantis" to more than mass approval, proceeding to smash it in his own unique way peaking with Alex Reece's "Pulp Fiction" and Skanna's "Find Me". Up next was the Scotty who opened with "Wash Over Me" by PFM and set the tone for another killer selection. Back To Speed was a truly emotional affair with some serious love for the music being rekindled and some of the finest tunes of the decade seeing the light of day once again. Will people look back on today's sound with the same nostalgia? I'm not so sure. (Guy Brickley)

clubzone

Detonate - Wed 13th Oct - Rock City, Nottingham

Detonates' third event at Nottingham's Rock City was arguably their largest. In fact, you'd be hard pushed to find a bigger D&B/Hip Hop/Breaks line up anywhere in the UK. Couple this with the fact that it's midweek and you'd think the promoters were off their heads. But having sold out the last 2 parties at this venue, the buzz surrounding this event was immense.

Headliners today are the Legendary Roni Size, returning to Rock City, on a Returning to 'V' tip. The man who makes you question how many voice boxes he actually has- beat box supremo Rahzel. Hip hop wise Rodney P and his band make it down, alongside lyrical geniuses Phi-Life Cypher. To top off the lineup was the breaks room, with Fabric regular Adam Freeland.

Detonate resident Transit Mafia started proceedings getting the early crowd moving as a steady flow of masses arrive. Meanwhile Detail and Santero were showing what we all know too well, they know their hip hop! Just as Joe Buddha starts his addition to the hip hop flava those in the know were feeling the full force of Rahzel. Ok so Detonate also played host to Killa Kela earlier in the year, and I thought he was good but Rahzel is on fire at the moment. Keeping a Rock-style vibe the White Stripes '7 Nation army' was replayed startlingly well, just with his mouth!! A plethora of hip hop tunes are skilfully recreated, Kayne Wests 'Jesus walks', dipping in at Run DMC's 'Here We Go', all contributing to getting that room the livest I have ever seen it! That was just the start of the mayhem in the main room....

If you were present at the last Detonate Rock City event you will know just how good Roni Size is to see live. The Return to 'V' tour must have given him a new lease of life, giving the vast crowd a healthy helping of all the classics 'Its Jazzy', 'Dirty Beats', and all time favourite 'Brown Paper Bag'. Drum and Bass cannot be heard in a better format! Not to be over-shadowed, arguably the prettiest thing in

D&B, Tali, once again stormed the massive Nottingham stage, impressing all with tight lyrics, and er...tight other stuff too!!! The drum and bass just kept on coming with Clipz, Zinc & Jenna G, and rounding off the small hours the Metalheaded, and Metaltoothed Goldie, wit Foxy, Dynamite and Eksman keeping the crowd in check.

You're yet to see the best of P! Rodney P headlined the hip hop room, with his live band, and man were they tight. They played out their well rehearsed routine to a packed room, and left everyone needing to pick up a copy of his new album. Phi-Life Cypher rocked it as per, with their intellectual lyrics and well crafted beats supplied by DJ Nappa. Keeping it continuously lively was our host-coming straight outta crossroads crazy muther.... called Mistajam!

Another massively successful episode for the Detonate history files. The variation of having a high quality breaks room this time meant that the atmosphere in the whole club was off the hook. It always impresses me just how many people come for such mid-week mayhem but long may they continue to supply us with gargantuan line-ups, so sick you need a doctor's note!!!

where it's at

Time: 10-3am. Cost: £9. Info: 07929 897741. Music Policy: D&B, Hip-Hop, Breaks. DJs: Pendulum, Nicky Blk Mkt, Poison, Lethal Effect, Access, Kontagious, MC Foxy, MC Dread, MC Stanza, MC Glenergy, MC Quasa.

>in motion

Date: Sat 5th Feb. Venue: Hobsons Choice, Banbury. Time: 8-3am. Cost: £8. Info: info@beatsinmotion.co.uk. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Mickey Finn & TC Islam, Reaction, Lockie, Freeze, Vyper & Juicy. MC Algar, Manikular.

>detonate - the next level

Date: Wed 9th Feb. Venue: Rock City, Talbot Street, Nottingham. Time: 8.30-3am. Cost: £16. Info: info@detonate1.co.uk. Music Policy: D&B / Hip-Hop / Breaks. DJs: Valve Sound (DJs TBC) - Andy C, Zinc, Friction, Dillinja, Lemon D, Scratch Perverts & Dynamite MC, MC Skibadee + more.

>back 2 bassiks

Date: Thur 10th. Feb. Venue: Carling Bar, Islington, London. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £3. Info: venue. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Randall, Rex, Storm, Andy C, MC GQ and more guests TBC.

>1 nation

Date: Sat 12th Feb. Venue: Carling Academy, Brixton, London. Time: 9-7am. Cost: £22. Info: 0208 363 6511. Music Policy: D&B, Old Skool, Garage. DJs: Andy C & Hype, Fabio & Grooverider, Dillinja & Lemon D, Nicky Blk Mkt & Ray Keith, Bad Company, Mampi Swift, Zinc, Bailey, Fluid, MC Skibadee, Dynamite, Eksman, Fearless, Shabba, Det, IC3, GQ, Kasha & Remino. Kenny Ken, Devious D, Jinx & Jacknife, Roll Deep and many more.

>turbulence

Date: Sat 19th Feb. Venue: Newcastle University Students Union. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £9.50. Info: 0191 261 2606. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. DJs: Grooverider, Loxy, Ink, MC Verse, Phobia, Piper. Jon the Teacher, Flab.

>detonate

Date: Fri 25th Feb. Venue: Stealth, Masonic Place, Nottingham. Time: 10-3.30am. Cost: £10. Info: 07957 645317. Music Policy: D&B, Hip Hop, Breaks. DJs: Adam F, Bailey, Transit Mafia, SP MC, MC Biggie, Santero, Detail, Cam (tbc), Fluff, Problem Child.

new years eve

>helter skelter - life

Venue: The Leisure Plaza Complex, H6 Childs Way, Milton Keynes. Time: 7.30-6am. Music Policy: D&B, Old Skool, Acid, Hardcore, Hard House, Techno, Funky House. Info: 01327 354700. DJs: Andy Farley, Paul Glazby, Lee Haslam, Philgood & Ram, Mr Arkoss, Nico Da Funkster, Francesco Disciples of Sound, Uberdruck. Rob Tissera, Matt Hardwick, J.F.K, Alex Kidd, Shan, Cally & Juice. Mampi Swift, Pendulum, Zinc, Friction, Bailey, Bryan Gee, Grooverider, Micky Finn, Nicky Blackmarket, Garry K, Simon Bassline Smith, Brockie, MC Eksman, Skibadee, Fearless, Dynamite, Shabba, IC3, Bassman, Fatman D, Juiceman, Presha Hixxy, Styles, Breeze, Odyssey, Mark EG, MC Ribbz, Seduction, MC Rude, Sy, Unknown, Brisk, MC Wotsee, Robbie Long, Ham, K Complex & AMS, Ethos, Sharkey, Recon, Kevin Energy & Sharkey, Mark Smith, Slipmatt, Dougal, MC Marley, Billy Bunter & CLSM, Lee UHF, MC Sykes, Scotti B, Jellybeanz, The Ratpack, Easygroove, DJ Vibes, Clarkee, Brockie, Squirrel, Lukozade, Perry K, MC Ice, Danny C, Everson Allen, Robbie Dee, MC Strict, Phantasy, Daz Willot, DJ Sam, The Wizard, Clarkee, Man Parris, Scorpio & The Producer, Chris Liberator, Dave the Drummer, Robbie Dee, Squidgy B and many more.

>breakneck

Venue: South Parade Pier, South Parade, Portsmouth. Time: 9-4am. Cost: £10. Info: 02392 732283. Music Policy: D&B, Hip-Hop. DJs: Mampi Swift, Friction, MC 2Shy, SDM Vs Triple M, Charge, M-Code, MC Gibber + guest MCs TBA, Gentle Bren, Uncle Ali, Dharma 77, Panoramix & guest MCs TBA.

>slammin vinyl

Venue: Royal Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset. Time: 7-6am. Cost: £49.50. Info: www.slamminvinyl.co.uk. Music Policy: D&B, Hardcore, Hard Dance, Trance, Old Skool. DJs: DJ Hype, Zinc, Mampi Swift, Nicky Blk Mkt, Fresh, Twisted Individual, Brockie, DJ SS, Friction, Fluid, MC Skibadee, Fearless, Dynamite, Det, IC3, Eksman, Foxy, Sugars, Fatman D, Storm & Whizzkid, DJ Sy, Breeze & Styles, Hixxy, Brisk, Mark EG, Dougal, Seduction, Kevin Energy & Sharkey, Gammer, D-Ice & Reality, MC Storm, Odyssey, Smiley, Wotsee, MC Rude, The Tidy Boys, Andy Farley, BK, Pete Wardman, Dave Lea, Lee Haslam, Daniel Bailey, Big Ben, Mark EG, Uberdruck, Scorpio & Producer, M-Zone, Vortex, Dolphin, Nick The Kid, Addiction, Tugie, MC Ribbz, Si the Sigh, Squidgy B, DJ SS, Mastervibe, Mistress Mo & Pilgrim, MC Lenni.

>breakin science

Venue: Koko Club, 1a Camden High Street, London NW1. Time: 9-6am. Cost: £35. Info: 07957 285 891. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Zinc, Dillinja & Lemon D, Mampi Swift, Adam F, Fresh, Shy FX, Friction, Bryan Gee, Micky Finn, DJ Hype, Dynamite MC, MC Skibadee, Shabba D, Ragga Twins, Det, Navigator, IC3, Eksman, Fearless, Five Alive.

>metropolis vs. factory

Venue: CIS New Century House, Manchester. Time: 8-6am. Cost: £25. Info: 07770 601731. Music Policy: D&B, Old Skool. DJs: Grooverider & Fabio, Bailey, Randall, Mampi Swift, Marcus Intalex, Sappo & Mark XTC, Silver, Futurebound, Mark OD & Prophecy, Sol & Xample, Orbital, 808 State, Altern 8, Mark XTC, Jay Prescott, Daz Willot & MC Energy, Grim Grinners, Luv Dub DJs, Xander, Mr Psik, DNCN, Roscoe + more.

>drive by

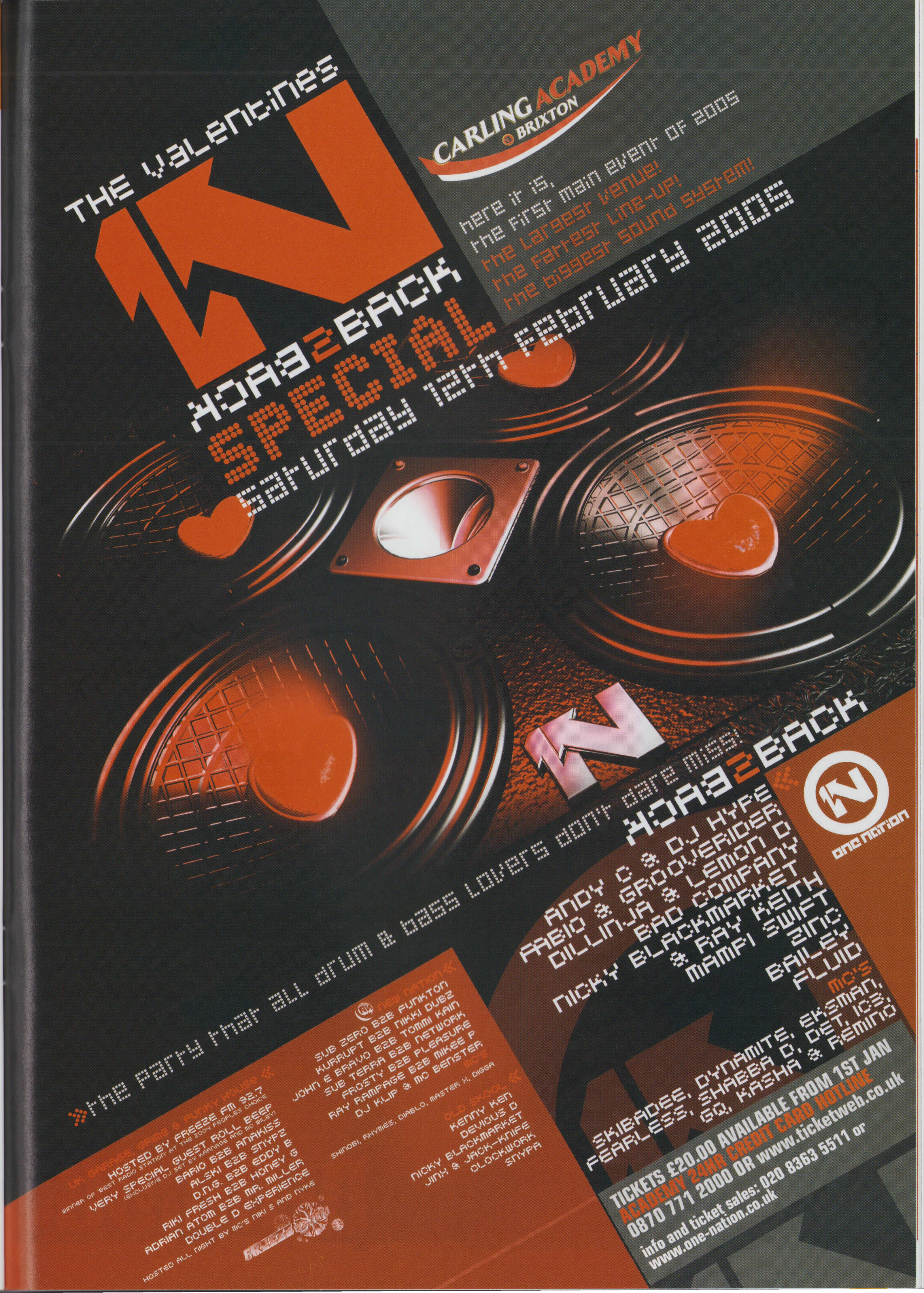
Venue: The Level, Park Row, Bristol. Time: 10-5am. Cost: £22. Info: info@driveby.co.uk. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: DJ Zinc, Dynamite MC, EZ Rollers, MC Jakes, Clipz, Distorted Minds, Gerard, Amc, MC Sweet Pea.

>destiny

Venue: Club Destiny, Old Christchurch Rd, Bournemouth. Time: 9-4am. Cost: £10. Info: 01202 467486. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Ray Keith, Deep, Dark Dean, Vespa, Korrupt and more TBC.

Faster - Saturday 6th November, Carling Academy, Islington

Twas about midnight when I got to the door of Islington's Carling Academy... I felt somehow at home as I approached the old stomping grounds and took a moment to reminisce as the security darted about sorting an issue. As I loitered wondering what the commotion was I bumped into Mosus from V Recordings. Anyway, the problem was dealt with - yoot had rushed the fire escape - they were caught - don't try pull a fast one at Faster... they're... faster than you! And so we made our way in - somehow I ended up as Mosus' guest! I personally couldn't be bothered to tell 'em otherwise. Mosus' first thought was I didn't have my own guest list... my first thought was that Mosus didn't have any friends! Possibly because nobody here understands a word he's saying! With him keeping one eye on the pome ex-pat Oz infiltrator, and me keeping one eye on the Kiwi-shearing UK infiltrator, we looked like a right pair of cross-Tasman Oceanic sceptics as we made our way up into the guts of the club. Friction was in full swing when we entered the dancehall - for me, the line-up was about as good as it can get - Friction, Bryan Gee, Andy C and Zinc with SP, GQ and Rage. Friction finished in fine fashion before SP introduced Bryan. As expected his set was frrresh, highlighted by two Dillinja bits, accentuated by GQ, which stripped the N1 back to its roots. For those that don't know, the Academy and N1 Shopping Centre are built on hallowed grounds - the Paradise Club, spiritual home of the junglist - the home of AWOL ("prrrobably the best club in the world"). With Faster only two months old, it looks like a decade on those vibes could return. The sound system is good enough it won't spoil your night but it needs some work. At the moment you'll find comfort in pockets. The preceding week there was another Oceanic rep in the house, Matt.Heat, manager of Perth's Trafik event, who'd been checking London clubs for the first time - the Carling Academy got a thumbs up from him over all other junglist haunts in the city. And I must agree, I'm feelin' the layout, with emphasis on the DJ and MC. Numbers-wise it's building steadily with a lot of new crew. It would be nice to see more of the old skool there too. Back to the music and Andy was next, who done what Andy does each and every time. I left before Zinc but the previous week he tore it, timing his drop of Mr. Majestik just before my departure - nice! **MK1**



D-BRIDGE

As a quarter of Bad Company UK, D-Bridge was part of one of the most successful Drum & Bass production collectives ever to have graced vinyl, and stepping out of such a situation to go solo was always going to be a daunting task…"When we started the BC thing, the ethos was to bring some excitement back into it, but it got a bit out of control. There became too much of a need for impact. I just needed my own space because it was all getting too much for me. At that point Dan went off and started his thing, which was really successful, so when I decided to go solo, I felt I had to live up to that and the BC thing, and therefore put a lot of pressure on myself. I definitely went through a stage of low confidence with my music, especially considering where the scene was at the time. I didn't see myself fitting in. Doing something like 'Libra' and 'The Bride' (the first Exit release) was so far removed from 'Shot Down On Safari', I didn't know whether people were going to get what I was doing. But whether they'd get it or not, I felt it was important in terms of showing other sides to my work. I've always been doing the music people are hearing from me now, but I felt I needed the opportunity to get people used to what I'm about, and my new label Exit has given me that."

As D-Bridge himself said, the first Exit 12", and his subsequent solo releases for that matter, have been quite a departure from what he was doing with BC. How did this transition from the trademark BC sound to D-Bridge's own trademark 'beautiful yet aggressive' sound come about?…. "I think living with my brother and spending time with the rest of his band (Spacek) has had a big effect on me as a producer. I helped out on their 'Vintage Hi-Tech' album, which showed me a different side of music and how to put it together: the importance of grooves and creating a more organic, swing rhythm. We also started a production crew (The Istickz), and started a night down at Plastic People called 'Istickz Studio' where we would plug in our MPCs (Midi Production Console) and laptops, and basically jam. With that and the fact I used to also DJ down there, I think the soulful side of me took over. That and being able to listen to a piece of music that didn't have to do something different every 4 bars to keep you interested. So now I'm taking some of the things I've learnt and trying to apply them to my work. The music I collect has that same ingredient: simplistic but affective, from producers like Jay Dilla, Wajdeed, Yesterday's New Quintet. I'm also a big fan of soundtracks from composers like Schiffren, Budd and Morricone, who are geniuses at painting pictures with sound, something that Drum & Bass is very good at also, so I suppose I'm trying to fuse the best bits of the music I love."

And so, a year on from going solo, the fact that D-Bridge has landed on his feet and is already looking forward, both in terms of his outlook on life and his music, shows that with a strong vision, belief and plenty of hard work, anything can be achieved, no matter what the circumstances… "This time last year I was really unsure. I'd just changed agencies and started doing my own thing. And now, to think that I'm only on my third release and I've already started a sub-label (Exit Vs.), I'm just like, 'wow'!" The Exit Vs series sees D-Bridge collaborating with producers from across the board to create a unique fusion of sounds, and has already borne its first fruits in the shape of a 12" containing 'Daylight' with Fierce and 'Labyrinth' with Concord Dawn… "The next release will be a track called 'Providence' with Commix, probably backed by a second Commix collaboration. I should also be going in with Teebee and hopefully Matrix. With the Vs series, I'm trying to promote both labels, as people will see from the artwork, so everybody can benefit. I'm also working on a thing with Keaton for his new label Refuge, and something with Verse, which should come out as the first release on his new label, Crunch." Also to look out for are a forthcoming EP for Bingo, including 'Pipe Dreams' and 'Portrait', a track on Soul:R ('Without Answers'), the Liquid V 12", which should already be in your shops, as well as the forthcoming Exit 12" 'Something To Hide'. And let's not forget the sensuous 'Silent Wonder' collaboration with Jenna G for her forthcoming album on Bingo, which is almost certain to create a huge impact on the scene.

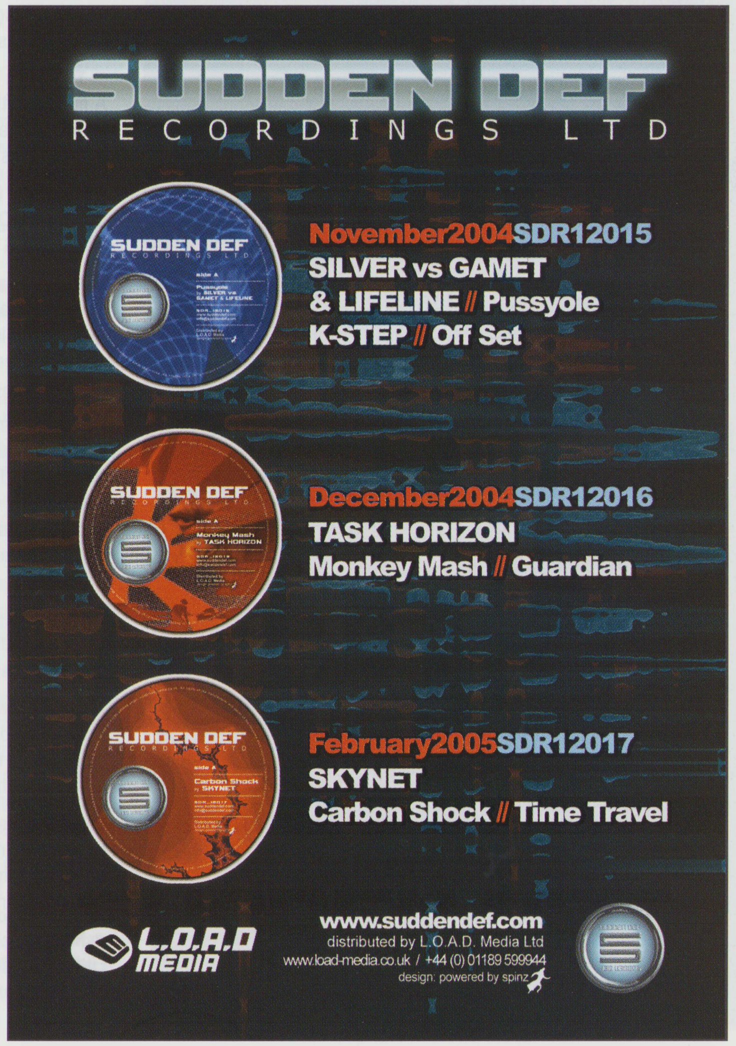
Yet this is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of D-Bridge's vision, and we know how big icebergs can be… "First of all I've decided to move to Bristol. It's just cheap. London kills me: it's so expensive and hard to save money. I don't want to get caught in a cycle of surviving. With the advent of the internet and AIM, it's just proved that you can be anywhere. Concord Dawn don't have to be here to do a track with me. So the first step is Bristol, which should be around February, so I'm looking forward to that. I'm basically going to hibernate and hook up with Fierce to work on our album project" …yes, you heard correctly… "Since I've been back in London from my holiday, I've just been crate digging, searching for samples, preparing for the album with Fierce. I find it really easy to work with Fierce, and he was like, 'well, why not?'"

However, the move to Bristol is a preparatory step to a move much further a field. A move to another country, moreover to another continent: to Japan …"My goal is to move there and write an album. Me and my girlfriend have just come back from a holiday there, and despite doing a five-date tour, I was able to see my own side and not just the business side of things, and really got a handle on what Tokyo and the vibe was about." But why Japan? "I've always loved the place and I get it for some reason. They have the whole technology thing down, yet they have the whole Zen thing going on as well. Check this: say you have a car accident and you smashed into a tree, they make you pay for the tree. It's things like that which I like. They're in touch with their surroundings. At the same time you see Tokyo… that place isn't just a city: it's like 2000AD… a city within a city. The move to Bristol is to save some money, and then I'd like to spend six months in Japan writing an album." And the album itself?… "The Japan album will be Drum & Bass. Drum & Bass and that city just seem to go together. I have all these spots like Patchko crossing and the 52nd floor of this skyscraper called Ropongi Hills, and being there I'd think to myself, 'I want to write a tune here'. Another place would be on the bullet train going from Tokyo to Osaka, watching Mount Fuji pass by. It's amazing. I'd recommend anyone to go there. Thinking about it, it might not even be until my second, third or fourth album that I get to go out to Japan, but it's something I'm definitely aiming for. The next thing at the moment is Bristol and the Fierce collaboration."

I don't know about you, but D-Bridge definitely convinced me about Japan. I might have to start making plans myself. But in the meantime, let's get the low down on one of the most stunning 12" of this year… "I made the Metalheadz Platinum 12" ('Bellini'/'True Romance') on my laptop. 'Bellini' I did in one session after the first date with my now girlfriend. It's kind of a love song. It even has a sample in there saying 'I want you'. That 12" was a personal achievement for me. When I found out it was going to be the first release on Metalheadz Platinum I was like 'yeah, in ten years I'll still be the first one'. I've always had love for Metalheadz in terms of the influence they've had over me. They're indirectly responsible for a lot of things. If there hadn't been a Bluenote, there wouldn't have been a Hardware. Me and Jason were vibing down there, coming back and making tunes. At the time there was only TOV, but they couldn't put out our stuff on there, so they made Renegade Hardware for us. So to get that release was definitely a personal achievement."

It is clear that D-Bridge has a very forward thinking and profound vision of what he wants to do with his music, but where does he see Drum & Bass heading in general… "I think next year is going to be the start of a lot of good things. Talking with producers, everyone's enthused and talking about their different ideas. There's a definite excitement. What I'm finding is that there are a lot of producers, new and established, starting labels and taking things into their own hands, and not talking about missing the good old days. I'm personally excited because I'm being sent all this music and I'm amazed by it. People are going in and it's getting a lot deeper: people like Break and Silent Witness, Commix, and a guy from Cologne called Explorer, who I'm feeling. It's healthy, and it's good for me as a DJ because I can play across the board whereas before, we'd (BC) pigeonholed ourselves without knowing it, and would have to anthem-bash. In the last few weeks I've done Faster, Traffic, Hospitality and Metalheadz, and I've played exactly what I've wanted to".

With his work as part of BC temporarily on the back-burner (no 'Bad Taste album then…), and the Digital Nation project being a definite no-go, D-Bridge has firmly set out his stall as a solo artist, with a new label, projects a plenty and the all important blessing from his counterparts… "I'm really pleased with the reaction I've been getting. I've been getting a lot of love from producers from all sides of the scene telling me they like what I'm up to, which is inspiring and all I could hope for. Now I'm just thinking about next year and moving it onto the next level." Make sure you keep an eye on this man, because at the rate he's moving, it's going to be hard work keeping up.



all star reviews

RUFFSTUFF

01	fresh & baron	super nature	dub
02	sub focus	x-ray	dub
03	lemon d	ghost weed	v recs dub
04	fresh ft mc darrison	all that jazz	v recs dub
05	shimon & ruffstuff	final conflict	dub
06	a.i.	desperado	v recs dub
07	clipz	slippery slopes	full cycle dub
08	sub focus	scarecrow	dub
09	roni size ft. b. knight & dynamite	no more	v dub
10	shy fx & t power rmx	champion dj	dub

DJ INK

01	dj ink & mc verse	soul 15	architecture
02	loxy & ink	zulu	karma
03	dj ink	beneath the surface	dub
04	stranjah & gremlinz	boy in da corner	karma
05	v/a	paranoia ep	renegade hardware
06	noisia	cold veins	dub
07	verse & bc uk	burning edge	dub
08	alpha omega	cats eye	dub
09	makoto & mc conrad	golden girl	good looking
10	goldie	inside your soul	metalheadz

DYLAN

01	dylan & bkey	the whorror	freak dub
02	seba & paradox	planet..stars	freak dub
03	echo	out of time (calyx remix)	violence dub
04	skynet	catherine wheel	dub
05	hive	neo (dom & roland remix)	violence dub
06	robyn chaos & bkey	the suffering	tech freak dub
07	tech itch	the hex	dub
08	thinktank	ritual	obscene dub
09	calyx	tearing us apart	dub
10	v/a	destruction ritual lp	tech freak

KRUST

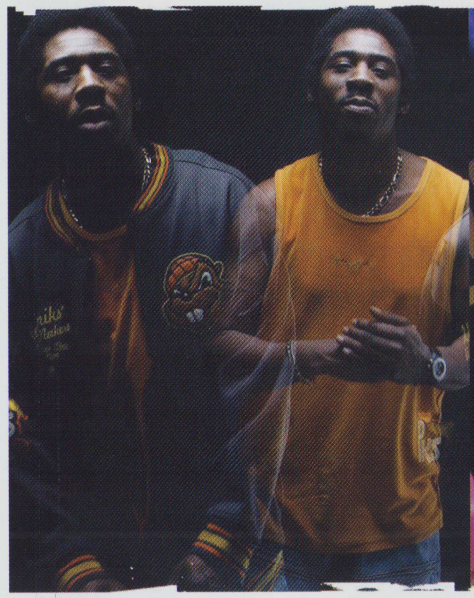
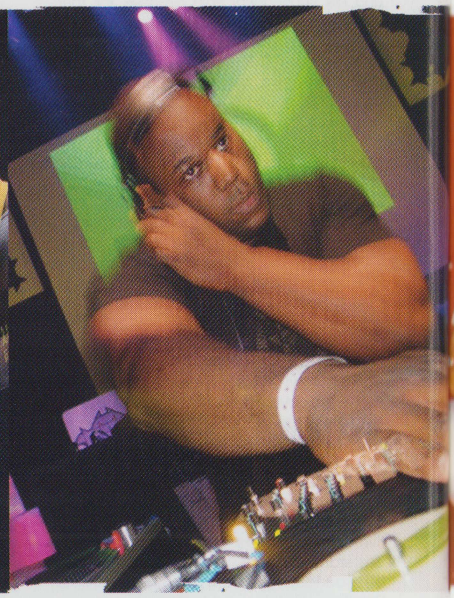
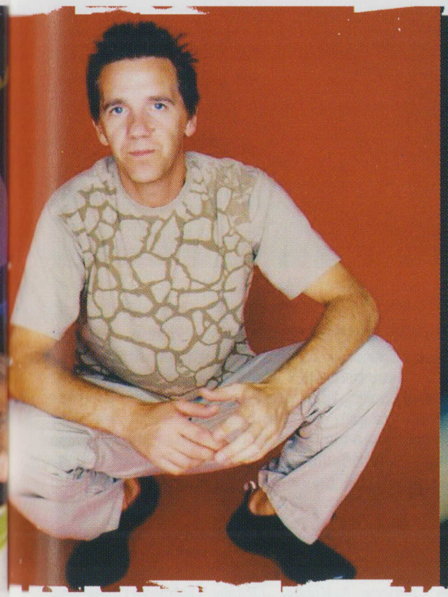
01	krust & clipz	brainwash	full cycle
02	clipz	slippery	full cycle
03	krust	malacie	full cycle
04	surge	stepper	full cycle
05	roni size & die	impact music	full cycle
06	unknown	true identity	metalheadz
07	tc	music madness	dub
08	clipz & dynamite mc	start the car	dub
09	d product	mandolin	full cycle
10	zinc & krust	new territiory	dub

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

01	artificial intelligence	movin on	v dub
02	dkay	casalli	dub
03	artificial intelligence	desperado	v dub
04	roni & die	impakt	full cycle dub
05	total science	going in circles	cia dub
06	a.i.	rise & shine (craggz & parallel rmx)	dub
07	digital	scam	dub
08	fresh	all that jazz / red octopus	v dub
09	d bridge	something to hide	dub
10	q project	greatest thing	cia dub

SIMON BASSLINE SMITH

01	drumsound & bassline smith	newsflash	dub
02	drumsound & bassline smith	killer dj	dub
03	generation dub	dub	dub
04	mc skibadee	big tings	dub
05	sub focus	x ray	dub
06	hazard	surprise	dub
07	probe & sylo	ghetto dub	dub
08	skarefade	take you	dub
09	2db	phatt beat	dub
10	mc det	untitled	dub

BRYAN GEE

Quiff - Going in Circles - Dub
Total Science mixing da hard with da smooth in the only way they know. This tune has it all - a nice intro, wicked vocals and a tearing drop which is heavy but very funky aswell. Gonna be a fave for a lot of DJs .

Peshay - Scorpio - Cubik Dub
My favourite Peshay track out of a new batch he dropped off. Scorpio is just fucking bad! Haven't heard nothing like this for years. Proper fucking jungle, how it used to be.

TC - Let's Go - Valve Dub
A new tune that's popping up in everyones sets. TC comes with a stormer thats gonna put him firmly on the map, this ones a head fuck

Roni, Die ft Hollie G - Impact Music - Full Cycle
One for the Dope Dragon fans. Da Scorpio's team up with Hollie G for a grimey affair - classic tune.

A.I. - Desperado / Movin' On - V dub
My bwoys can do know wrong. Two next level tunes making a killer 12" on V. Both tunes are so serious and so sincere. Classic V material.

Fresh ft Darrison - All That Jazz - V Dub
Darrison comes in hot after his collaborations with Roni on Return to V and Adam F on da Sunshine tune to bless 'All That Jazz' a track thats been smashing it with da trust me inspired b line making it da complete package whatch out 4 a early new year release on this bigggg tune

T Power - System & Delta - Liquid V
T Power takes time out from collabing with Shy to roll out two excellent tracks for Liquid V. Your gonna love these believe me.

Clipz ft Sweet Pea - Full Cycle
Now here comes da real shit! Clipz and Sweet Pea come with a tune that can only be described as nothing other than Bristol. Heavy, heavy tune, gwaan Clipz.

Sub Focus - X Ray - Ram Dub
Heavy tune from Sub Focus who seems to have captured the Ram sound beautifully. This is a guaranteed crowd rocker.

Nu:Tone - Heaven Sent - Hospital
Little vocal ting to look out 4 featuring SP MC from his forthcoming album, a little party one.

Roni Size - Want Your Body (Calibre rmx) - V Dub
Joe Roberts and Roni provided a great piece of music in the original mix of 'Want Ya Body', taken off the Return to V album. Calibre was the obvious pick to bring the flava and turn this tune into another dimension of funk. Out in Jan.

MAMPI SWIFT

Blame - Rise of the Machines - Dub
Been opening with this one for a while and every time people are asking me what it is. Blame is back! With production that will frighten the best of the dnb producers and I do mean the best!! even better production level than before. Sure to shock!!! Opening with half step beats and vocodered vocals saying 'The Machines will Rise' it then breaks into a massive bassline which is guaranteed to make an impact. There are a few signature versions of this about on plate at the moment. It's set to be the title track of Blame's debut EP on Charge.

Gridlok - Trippin' rmx - Charge Dub
Gridlok got the remix duty on this one for my forthcoming album. The distinctive sounds from the original are there, but Gridlock's rolling sound is stamped all over this. At a time where alot of people trying are switching up all over the place it's a breath of fresh air to hear a track roll out but still destroy dancefloors.

Dom & Roland - Neo rmx - Dub
Dom has stepped up to remix one of the biggest tunes of 2003. The original nearly got on the Matrix sound track, the remix is worth making another sequel for. Dom's made it more epic, deeper, and even more cinematic but still maintains the dancefloor elements of the original. This will get massive but because its one of those stand out tracks, as well as being a remix of a big tune.

Mampi Swift - Hackers - Dub
Did this one a few weeks ago and had to move something else off the album to make room. This came out exactly as I planned, so I'm well happy with it. It's a definite Mampi Swift tune cos it1s exactly what I play - proper dancefloor tear out. Massive drum fills, 4 to the floor bass kicks, and high energy basslines are what makes this track.

Blame - Planet to Planet - Dub
Blame's taken it back to the old skool with this one. Haunting pads break into old skool stabs then it just fires off. This one's different to everything that1s about at the moment. I wouldnt like to jinx any one but I'm thinking classic!!

MICKEY FINN

Majistrate/Nicol - Yankee Doodle - Urban Takeover
This one starts with a trinkerly sound soon to be backed up with a big snare that paints a picture of what's to come. Then with out further a do, this stab-bass driven piece of work lets you have it… and have it, it does; always keeping you interested with its little changes drop after drop, George Bush style.

The Force - Drop it like this - Urban Takeover
This is one for the campsite. I had this little conversation with the Force boys about having a change up – don't let production sound the same and all that – loads of people take note – don't know if I hurt their feelings but they came back with this number which starts with a romantic string fooling you to believe that all's going to be nice, until a screeching drop when its vox introduce the full force of this little ditty… well… big ditty should I say. The bassline is murdering the dancefloor from Perth to London; and just when you thought it had settled, another drop hits you. The Force boys are on a mission; plenty more to come!

Congo Natty - Champion DJ (Shy FX rmx)
Shy ain't playin' here! First of all let's congratulate him for this piece of work as far as remixes go. This bit of dub 'as me one foot skanking all over the gaff... touch ya toes petal! It takes me back to the days of blues in Woolwich ("boss, ya 'av ya two pound entry… Wha' two pounds ya nah"). This must 'av been an 'ard job as the original was out and out classic. So to be able to add your touch to a track that was already so big is a big task on its own, and he's pulled it off. This sub ragga movin bass does the job backed up by a wicked catchy old time riddem. "Dad, 'av you got a riddem I can 'av?" 10 out of 10 Shy – wicked remix.

The Force - Danger Man - Urban Takeover
The "I am not a number I'm a free man" intro makes people believe it should be called Prisoner. This quick, off the mark track is by The Force again – well I did say that these boys are on a mission – to the point, with no hanging around; beats bang straight in the intro to get the party going with snippets from the old Prisoner programme and atmospheric strings in back ground until it unleashes the demons on you with this bubbly bassline that's an instant gut mover. This one definitely keeps the party going on the dance floor

Majistrate - Foundation rmx - True Playaz
A wicked remix and 'as got to be one of the bassiest records of 2004. Majistrate 'as done a tiptop job here; you can tell it's the remix straight away; beats lash ya when that big kick and dirty snare rips in slapping ya face. Then, to make matters worse, the bass gives you a kick up the ass… so all in all ya been right duffed up. Never fails to work.

FRICTION

Jonny L - Back to your Roots - Dub
This one's been my little gem over the past 6 months and I've been absolutely hounded by people wanting to know what it is. What makes the tune for me is the very original sounding vocal that runs through the track. Anyone that has heard me play lately will definitely know this one.

High Contrast - Lights Go Down - Hospital
I first heard this in Zurich a few months back as an unfinished idea that High Contrast was working on. My first thoughts were that this tune had the best intro I had heard for a long time. It builds and builds with an almost trance sounding / 80's feel to it. The drop is slightly harder than what we are used to from the Welsh whiz kid but hits the right spot as ever.

Dillinja '96 Thing - Valve
Another track that has been very prominent in my sets recently is this stormer from the base master himself. A soulful, melodic intro breaks down into a horrific baseline, before dropping into lashings of powerful breaks and subs as only Dillinja knows how.

Roni Size - Want Your Body (Calibre rmx) - V
V Recordings bring the vibes once again with Calibres take on one of Roni size's many tracks from his forthcoming LP. The intro rolls straight away with lots of nice noises and hits, before dropping into a bass line bound to get the ladies moving.

Raf & Ill Logic - Absolute Truth - 31 Records
This is one of my personal faves for this issue, coming from the Doc Scott stables. I would best describe it as an exquisite sounding roller that just does everything right. Rolling breaks combined with cool effects take you into a tasty bass line with lots of subtle little change ups and hits. Definitely one for the mixing crew.

all star charts

DIESELBOY

01	sub focus	scarecrow	ram
02	pendulum	tarantula	breakbeat kaos
03	counterstrike	deathstar	freak
04	alliance	thru your eyes	bc presents
05	fresh & baron	supernature	breakbeat kaos
06	skynet	catherine wheel	human
07	evol intent & ewun	untitled	unknown
08	blame	tornado	unknown
09	nero	dick tracy	formation
10	e. intent, mayhem & think	broken sword	dub

JOHN B

01	john b vs. kim wilde	helpless	cdr
02	echo	falling	violence
03	sub focus	scarecrow	cdr
04	s'express	s'express (john b rmx)	cdr
05	vector burn	death shall have no dominion	cdr
06	iowatest	timelapse (john b remix)	cdr
07	marilyn manson	the new shit (john b remix)	cdr
08	john b ft marcy meow	tainted love	nu electro cdr
09	young punkx vs. john b	wake up, shake up	cdr
10	john b ft miss ch33tah	fashion	nu electro cdr

D-BRIDGE

01	raf & ill logic	we are now	dub
02	d-bridge vs commix	providence	exit versus dub
03	calyx	tearing us apart	dub
04	marcus intalex	afrikaa	soul:r dub
05	artificial intelligence	moving on	dub
06	grooverider	skies	dub
07	jenna g (ft d-bridge)	silent wonder	bingo dub
08	marky & xrs	striptease	innerground dub
09	d-bridge	without answers	soul:r dub
10	break	zero degree	quarantine dub

PENDULUM

01	fresh	immortal	dub
02	pendulum vs baron	guns at dawn	dub
03	silent witness	triple seed	dub
04	h.o.e.	lord of the null lines (photek rmx)	dub
05	noisia/c4c/phace	dead air	dub
06	sub focus	x-ray	dub
07	hive	neo (dom & roland rmx)	dub
08	tc	dub tings	dub
09	duo infernale	positive vibes	dub
10	blame	machines	dub

BLACK SUN EMPIRE

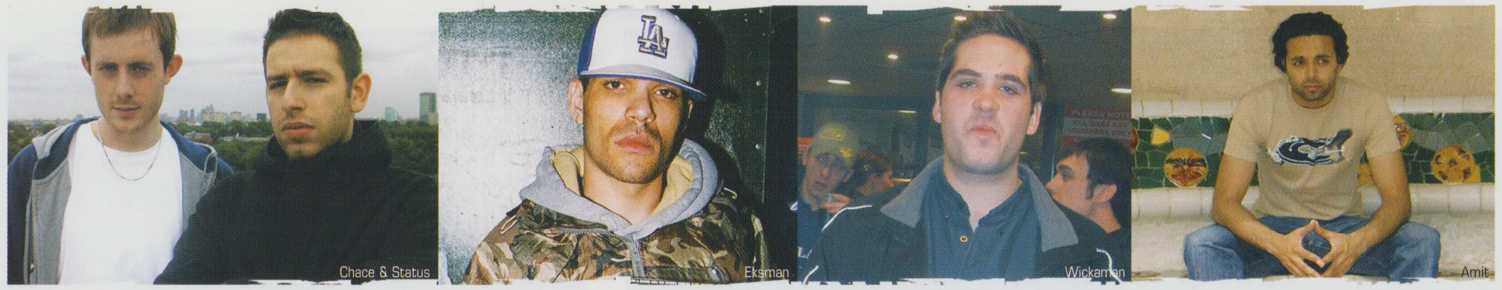
01	tactile	spaced out	timeless
02	dance4life	breathe (b.s.e. rmx)	dub
03	fierce & c4c	carrier (gridlok rmx)	quarantine
04	illskillz	martians 2	brigand
05	noisia	block control	moving shadow
06	bse vs corrupt souls	everything	bse recordings
07	calyx & kontrol	set me free	thunderous
08	tactile	maharajah	unsigned
09	teebee	april	bc recordings
10	corrupt souls	skullfukked	unsigned

DJ MARKY

01	craggs & parallel forces	flatfoot	plate
02	calibre	it's in u	signature
03	drumagick	classe a	innerground
04	ryme tyme	monkey fish	bingo
05	generation dub	think you bad	plate
06	makoto ft conrad	golden girl	good looking
07	tommy knocker	brothers and sisters	intercom
08	klute	don't wanna be alone	commercial suicide
09	another way	mist remix	plate
10	marky & xrs	butterfly	innerground

Edited by: Frenzic, DJ Epik, Shodan, Ben Holdtight, MArk OD.

9-10 classic. 8 killer. 5-7 it works. 3-4 filler. 1-2 ashtray



Chace & Status · Eksman · Wickaman · Amit

David Carbone · Generation Dub · Sub Focus · Surge

7 Devise & 3a - Trapped Inside / I'm Not Afraid - 3d Mode

All about the A-side here. "Trapped Inside" stomps along remorselessly with snares that slap you round the face and thumping, gut churning bass. The flip is a rolling amen number with plenty effects flying about but I dont know if its my speakers or poor mastering but there doesn't seem to be a great deal of bass in there.

7 TKO - Alien Nation / Ogo - Abstract Inc

Following on from their debut on Infared, "Rolf Harris" and collaborations with Adam F for Beakbeat Kaos, TKO come with a slice for their fledgling imprint, Abstract Inc. "Alien Nation" kicks off with ravey/techno style arpeggios and female spoken word vox before dropping somewhat limply into a bass switching roller with grimey, muted beats and sci-fi fx. Flip for some off-key military beats and nasty basses.

7 TC1/Stress Level/Total Science - No Way Back - Advanced

The Oxford based music machine rolls on, this time with new-recruits TC1 & Stress Level leading the charge. "No Way Back" is all about soothing strings, funky keys and soulful vocals. On flip, they turn their hand to remixing Total Science's "Picture Perfect", the result being rolling beats layered with sexy pads and keys. Smooth as the cream in a twinky.

7 V/A - Back to the Void EP - Barcode

'Dante's Inferno', I imagine named for its 'calm before the storm' style structure, is sick - think quiet sleeping village then almighty volcanic eruption to gauge what Spor has produced here. 'Pressure Point' by Psidream & Mechwarrior again intros in denial of its mass - more chopping breaks tearing through the mix as it drops the bombs - "what's up?" Ewun & Evol Intent's 'Headcase' is a dark Tramen monster with filtered bass passes and filthy edits. T.Z.A rounds this EP off with 'Man Of War', with heavy darkness from the abyss - "what the fuck is going on?"

7 Chase & Status - Call To Prayer / Stand Off - Barcode

Heavily edited breaks are the order of the day here which the guys seem to have perfected. "Call To Prayer" features a eerie and vaguely familiar atmospheric intro, reminiscent of "Messiah" before launch into an assault of filthy reeces and tight heavily edited breaks. "Stand Off" fuses classic hip hop vox from Lord Finesse with nasty gravelly lead, tough driven drums and deep sub. Your Mum won't like this one, trust.

8 Friction & Baron - Butt Ugly Martians - Baron Inc / Shogun

How's this for a pairing and dual release? Bound to be big… and it is! 'Butt Ugly Martians' is the epitome of Baron & Friction combined - full bodied squelching bass with less emphasised breaks providing basis for a big step, stomping work out straight from outer space. 'Hanger Lane' flips the script - more musical, more tearing, more beat orientated and a more contorted bass rinse for the headz.

8 Zinc & Eksman - Drive By Car - Bingo

With two of the scene's rave heavyweights involved, this one was bound to be a dancefloor smasher. No disappointment here then. Eksman's furious lyrics accompany Zinc steamtrain of a tune perfectly with tasty amen driven beat rolling under "Super Sharp Shooter"-esque bass. He shoots, he scores and the Chavs go wild.

8 Wickaman - Death by Stereo / Ring of Fire - Black Widow

The second outing on Infared's sister label, Black Widow sees Wickerman ditching his partner-in-crime, J Majick to go solo for two tracks. "Ring of Fire" is pure dancefloor with chunky beats, warbling bass and clever reverse edits. 'Death by Stereo' is more of a radio friendly roller.

8 Baron & Fresh - Supernature / Shakedown - Breakbeat Kaos

This 12" is the long awaited BBK debut from Mr Baron who was signed exclusively to the label a few months back. Firstly Baron combines his talents with label boss man, DJ Fresh, for 'Supernature' – a naughty little dancefloor number, doing damage from the word go with that stepping Snapshot-esque clean twanged bassline. I'm leaning towards the flip however; 'Shakedown' brings some neck-wrenching tearout flavour – one of those tunes you can't help but rock to. But remember, if you want the picture disc that hasn't got 'Shakedown' on – instead that comes with 'Farenheit'. In conclusion, not the best release from BBK to date but a good start from Baron. Besides, with the quality they've already had out, being 'not the best' doesn't mean it ain't good, far from it in fact.

8 Fracture & Neptune - Untitled / Continuities - Breakin'

Bassbin's sister label continues to step solidly alongside with another journey into break-infested waters. Fracture & Neptune return after a timely break from the scene with this broken, dub-heavy 12". 'Untitled' is all about the killer drum breaks, that are full of intricate edits but maintain a proper dancefloor groove. Stark atmospherics make way for a devastating b-line that cuts straight through the breaks, with some minimal dub keys stabs interspersed. 'Continuities' has a genuine live feel to it, delving into deep cinematic territories complete with vox samples and horror movie keys.

7 D Kay - Martians Pt 2 / Casali - Brigand

Straight to the flip here. "Casali" blends soulful reggae vocals and dreamy keys with feirce amens heavy sub bass to create an aggressive dub-wise stormer. The track is further lifted by silky flute riffs and swirly dub effects. The A-side is a disappointing follow up to last years smasher, "Martians".

6 V/A - Spine EP - BSE Recordings

Next we have a 4 track EP presented by Dutch trio, Black Sun Empire. As per usual, this is slotted nicely into the "Neurofunk" pidgeon-hole and kicks off with BSE's own "Fearless", a brooding roller full of techy noises and squelchy bass. Skynet's "Night Raiders" is another techy roller with a strong high picthed lead sound whilst Jade & Matt-U's "Got Lost" stomps along nicely nicely with plenty of atmospherics and nasty synths. Last but not least is Chris SU + Rawfull's "Panorama" with its trance influences and amen driven drums.

7 Q Project - Ask Not / Time's Up - CIA

Do Quiffy and Spinback ever sleep? Or have they perfected the art of making tunes *in* their sleep? Whatever, they are certainly prolific in their output. This slice of plastic is Quiff on his jack jones under the guise of Q Project and he's back on the rolling melodic vibe. "Ask Not" is all about, lush keys, high pitch strings and catchy, garage-style, stabby bassline. The flip, "Time's Up" is more of a liquid roller with diva-esque female vox and spacey atmospherics.

8 SKC & Chris Su - Desert Siege - Commercial Suicide

No doubt, 'Desert Siege' is a huge piece of work from Eastern Europe's leading contingent combi, SKC & Chris SU. This has been smashing up dancefloors all over, heavily caned by most of the A-list. The synth work is incredible, extremely emotive; the breaks are runnin'; the twisted b-line is unmistakable. 'Crash' is all about dirty bass, a funky riddim and certainly rolling, with chunky stepper beats courtesy of a hefty metallic snare and stomping kicks - one for the head-nodders that's for sure.

7 Amit - Sound Warrior / Motherland - Commercial Suicide

Klute's not a man to shy away from what's considered "abnormal" in drum and bass and once again he presents two tracks from talented newcomer, Amit for Commercial Suicide. "Sound Warrior" is all about unsual drum patterns and hyponotic dub style effects whilst "Motherland" leans heavily on asian style wails and atmospherics. Very creative but not for everyone.

7 Jem - They (Photek rmx) - Crazy Wise

Rupert Photek brings some chopped up sickness to Jem's 'They' on the debut release for her own imprint, CrazyWise Music. This comes with Cut Chemist mixes on the flip but here we're concentrating on Photek. On the rise Jem, moving within increasingly prestigious circles, and musically on the up n'up, tracked down LA based Photek for an appearance to launch Crazy Wise, and he's done a pretty good job reworking this for her, drum&bass wise - big beats, broken breaks, drilling metallic bass and Jem's "who are they, where are they" vox make for a right floor smasher.

7 Breakage - Staggered Dub / 4 Me - Critical

Breakage continues his one-man dub-wise assault on drum and bass with two cuts for Critical. Side A: "Staggered Dub" is all about heavy amens, knee-trembling subs and reggae chants. "4 Me" on the flip is slightly more subtle with dreamy, jazzy pads, rolling drums and subtle bass.

7 D Kay / Verse - Off the Rails / Azur Eyes - Crunch

MC Verse's new imprint, Crunch, kicks off with a collaboration with Austrias finest, D.Kay, "Off The Rails" is all about high energy beats, distorted subs and tearing reeces. Verse's solo effort, "Azur Eyes" on the flip is the better of the two tracks however with succulent, jazzy chords, tight rolling beats, tasty horn stabs and delicious subs.

6 Rhythm Beater - Pied Piper - Cutterz Choice

Cutterz Choice continue to roll out the freshness with another couple of straight-up, dancefloor tracks aimed at those who like their music simple, rolling and bass heavy. 'Pied Piper' is a hypnotic roller complete with distorted bass-frequencies, haunting pan pipe samples and a tumbling sub-bass. Flip for the dub-wise 'Clear Da Dance' which is the stronger track for me, full of sinister synths, bongo rhythms and a low-frequency wobbling bassline that will shake those floors without a doubt.

7 Davide Carbone - Totally Distracted - Defunked

Following swiftly on from their "Soulful Behaviour 2" long player, Defunked return to their 12" release schedule with a slice of wax from Davide Carbone & Kubiks. "Totally Distracted" features soulful vocals from Clari riding over flowing beats and chords. The flip, "Let It Roll", combines melodic chord patterns with tight, rolling beats and pounding sub bass.

7 Q Project / Raf & Ill Logic - In Hutch / Fever - Dispatch

Quiffs been at it again. The man's a tune machine. This time it's Dispatch Recordings and the track's entitled "In Hutch", a bongo driven skanky rollout with chunky beats. Flip for shuffling beats, tasty guitars and minimal atmospherics from Raf & Ill Logic in the form of "Fever".

7 Silent Witness - Jump Gate / Amazon - DN Audio

The DNAudio crew continue to impress with their 4th release, a solo 12" by Silent Witness. 'Jump Gate' is a razor-sharp, mechanical journey that begins with some epic synth stabs and menacing sweeps, before a filthy b-line leads into morphing breakbeats, and some intricate edits. 'Amazon' brings the early Virus-vibes with a simple drum loop and a filtered analogue bass, while the synths creeps inside your brain with twisted precision. Another worthy addition to this ever-progressing label's catalogue.

8 Ill Logic & Raf - One Step to Glory / Out of Nowhere - DZR

Its been quite a year for Ill Logic & Raf and they have more than proved themselves capable of creating quality, "musical" drum and bass that's just as at home rocking the dancefloor. The first of these two tracks for Emotif, offshoot, DZR is "One Step to Glory", a moody, atmospheric roller with superb vocals from Don-E that set the tone perfectly for the ominous, brooding bass-line that storms in at the drop. The flip, "Out of Nowhere, starts with a tense intro full of sparse percussion and minimal strings before dropping into an off-key stepper full of suspense.

7 Phantasy & Shodan - No Liars / Atomic Age rmxs - Easy

The Easy Records revival rolls on! Eastend mechanic duo, Phantasy & Shodan have handed over two tracks to Distorted Minds and Probe & Sylo for the remix treatment. Distorted Minds have taken on "No Liars" with Fatman D on vocals. The result is exactly what you'd expect, subtle as a brick but just as effective. Ok, so you've heard that bass before and the beats are a little familiar but trust me, drop it in a rave and watch the cap frenzy that ensues. Probe & Sylo continue to build themselves a solid reputation with their take on "Atomic Age". Atmospheric intro strings build up to a super-wobble fuelled drop and driving beats, created another solid dancefloor workout. Watch out for a string releases on Easy and other labels from Phantasy & his tea boy, Shodan.

7 Shy FX, T Power, Elephant Man - Nature (Photek) - Ebony

The original mix of "Nature" appeared on Shy FX & T Power's 2002 long player, "Set It Off". Photek takes up the remix mantle for this ragga chat laiden track and introduces dirty stabs and pounding subs into the mix. The 12" features vocal and instrumental version for the best of both worlds.

9 D Bridge vs Concord Dawn & Fierce - Labyrinth - Exit

D-Bridge unleashes his first set of collaborations on his own imprint with two totally different vibes coming through on each side. 'Labrynth' builds with a long intro, led by an epic string line as the thunderous, Photek-style bass line is filtered in before a torrential drop. Plenty of subtle touches and samples are scattered throughout the track, and all in all this is a definite floor filler. The flip is one of the most beautiful D&B tunes I've heard in years, taking things back to the spatial, simplistic vibe of the mid-nineties. 'Daylight' is a delicate roller, produced to perfection with the emphasis on the beats, vocals and rhodes and the deep sub coming in almost as an afterthought. This may not be a peak-time floor-filler but it epitomizes what this sound should be about for me.

8 Noisia & Pacific - On Your Mind / Crippled - Film

Intricacies abound here, and it's no surprise with this pairing - neurofunk business running wild as they take 'On Your Mind' into the deepest cut - crisp beats, futuristic stabs, throbbing bass, complex edits and a fresh delivery. 'Crippled' is a much lighter, more easy going number, with depth all the same - emotive strings, intelligent beats, deep pads - uplifting yet strangely haunting. Also look out for the previous Film release, 'Elektra' b/w 'Eastern Organic' - Future Prophecies on a subterranean tip.

7 Spinor vs Falcon - One more Time - Fokuz Ltd

Straight outta Rotterdam, Fokuz bring us the 3rd part of their Ltd series from Spinor & Falcon. 'One More Time' is a souled-out, bass-morphing groove with a touch of the Matrix about it. Deep and sultry atmospherics with a tough edge and '96/'97 style vocals and b-line, combine to create a little gem on this underrated label. Flip for a more tech-influenced jam, complete with offbeat synth-stabs, a steppin break and a sub-bass from the depths. A gem that is well worth checking.

6 Generation Dub - Sexy Beast EP - Formation

After a lulling intro the title track, 'Sexy Beast', is loaded with a false sense of security before dropsping straight into winding screwface bass and whipping snares. 'The Shining' also starts subtly, slowly working the string's intensity to set the stage for a stomp-out of single hit bass tones and stepping drums. 'Altered State' brings some darkness to the fore as it draws intergalactic elements into a huge build and equally naughty explosive drop - my pick of the EP. Twisted Individual's remix of 'The Puppet Master' uses a minimalist break and trademark bass 'longside sinister effects and a whispering vocal for a dash of wickedness.

7 Dylan - Metaphor / Lost Dream - Freak

Dylan is one sick puppy! 'Metaphor' tightens its grip round your neck from the top. So sinister it's scary! The intro is the calm before the storm however as a throbbing bassline and ka-ka drums build into a frenzied aural onslaught of twisted Mentasms and old skool stabs. Ouch! If you've ever woken up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat then you'll know what 'Lost Dream' is all about. The synth stabs are disgusting and the tidy drum edits only increase the feeling of tension. Ugly.

8 Technical Itch - Nothing / Ruff, Rugged & Raw VIP - Freak

On paper the first thing you think is this is gonna make your ears bleed. Nothing prepares you for the militancy to come. "You will do nothing, nothing at all," oldskool stabs and dirty bass, then comes the pain; Amen pressure that will make the uninitiated shit their pants. This one's more dangerous than a vexed Rottweiler. 'VIP' uses the original vox beefing it up even further and twinning it with angry bass and metal-edged drums.

9 Sub Focus - Sound Guy / Bluenote - Frequency

As far as I'm concerned, as an individual artist fresh out the blocks, Sub Focus is on the money like no other right now. Why this boy isn't nominated for Best Newcomer Producer I don't know - he should be running away with it, period - I ain't even prepared to argue. This is his first Frequency release since 'Acid Test' (the most sat on 12" of the year) and once again he's come seriously correct. Since droppin' hot off of the press 'Soundguy' has pummelled every system 'round the world - with its High Noon meets The Mexican intro, its reggae fused drop and its Buju Banton bass explosion, this side kills dem, dead! Flip the script for 'Bluenote's energetic beats with unmistakable Sub Focus snare setting the pace for a synthed bass guitar riff, sub interlude funking thrashout.

8 Die & Photek - Thunder ft Holly G - Full Cycle

Here's a tasty combo meal deal for y'all. The 'Thunder' burger - lashings of the double-act's beats, some Photek break filling on a bed of Die bass, all complimented by sprinklings of Holly G vox. The combi works well all round. I'm loving it! On the side we got some funk-fuelled 'Collision Course' fries - one of those tracks that forces you into spasms of head nodding bop-outs, before you even realise you're doing it.

7 Surge - Chess Boxing / Countdown - Full Cycle

Kung-Fu style chimes and military snare drums open things up as trademark running Full Cycle breaks and 'Mystery of Chessboxing' vox lead the way to the explosive knees-up penetrating bassline and wobbly edits. It gets more intense the further in you get, its not for the fainthearted. 'Countdown' kicks off with classic scratchmaster cuts, crazy arcade sounding samples, and a no nonsense jump-up bassline that will have those who love to bounce pogoing all over the floor.

8 Digital - Soundkilla / 48x - Function

When it comes to dubwize drum and bass to smash up the rave then Digital is the man. His beats and bass are superb here creating a wicked vibe, one thing I'm not overly keen on is the soulful dancehall vocal, I find it grates after a few listens on an otherwise top track. The b-side '48X' will blow you away! A rave influenced intro with Digital's favoured sirens and effects can't prepare you for the onslaught to come. Ferocious amen drums, mountains of bass and trigger-happy siren samples make this dangerous to tangle with. Heavyweight!

7 V/A - Dubplate Killaz EP 2 - Ganja

'It's Here' - typical Hazard - classic Ganja - setting the pace for part two of Ganja's 'Dubplate Killaz' EP trilogy. Flip this and Hype takes control with 'No One' - a hefty stepping roller from the label's dapper don. Onto the second slice where Pascal & Monty bring some rude bwoy business in the shape of 'Dub Fe Dub' - a real driving synthed-dub jungle amen-licked funkout fe dem. Flip that, Potential Bad Boy stylee for the final ride on this EP, on a similar tip to 'You're Mine', 'Sun Is Shining Bright' featuring Yush's vox is slightly more bouncy than the previous, keeping things light-hearted yet runnin'.

8 V/A - Dubplate Killaz EP 3 - Ganja

"The game of chess is like a sword fight [but safer], you must think first before you move." Gwaan Shimdawg! For me this is the DKEP3's highlight - Shimon's rework of Hype's seminal '94 jungle piece, 'You Must Think First', has been handled brilliantly, taking the vibe bang up to date yet adhering to essential elements and values from it's origins. Classic Ganja gone dutty! Next up is the 'Real Shit' bringing a hip and a hop to modern-day D&B - a nasty roller from DJ Hazard. The 'Crowd Says Reload' by Potential Badboy featuring MC Det takes precedence on the second slice of wax. Nuff flava and pretty tearing, this is Potential demonstrating his naughtier side, combining Det's vox to devastating effect. Finally, 'Human Mind' - archetypal Hazard with a twist - 4/4 filth; dealt through a tearing rinse of maddening horror… and this goes off!

7 Swarm - Philly EP - GASM Recordings

Next up on US based GASM, we have the "Philly" EP, 4 tracks of darkside pressure from the likes of Mason, Trust & D-Star. All four tracks are along the same lines with heavily edited, nasty drums, filthy stabs and thunderous bass. Not for the faint hearted!

6 High Contrast - Angels & Fly - Hospital

'Angels And Fly' with its vocal courtesy of Nolay, rising star of the UK Grime scene, is High Contrast on a slightly different tip. The 'Club Mix' vocal version has hints of Dillinja through its breaks as Nolay thrashes her vox over the top, all brought together with that High Contrast vibe. Grime is right! I'm personally feelin the slighty more subtle flip though - promoted as the album instrumental mix. Hints of Latin flavour with tough yet subdued beats in comparison to the club mix, this ones for the DJ.

8 Logistics - Spacejam EP - Hospital

Logistics' first full release on Hospital is a double pack no less sporting 4 tracks that you will probably have heard if you've been out and about recently. 'Spacejam' is a high octane roller that commences with a sick bongo hook, a looping synth and some ethereal voice pads, before the bass drops in underneath the multi-layered breaks. 'Kaleidoscope' is made up of Logistics' trademark filtered amens, a crisp drum kick and some looping disco-samples and will please fans of 'Together', as it's on a similar tip. The big one is the 'Together VIP' which takes the original and gives it a slightly more digital twist, with some beefier drums and a resonating synth that echoes the bassline. 'Inside My Soul' completes this long-awaited EP in fine style, with some soulful Rhodes trickling over the top of the fluid breaks and synth bassline.

7 D Kay & Marcus Intalex - Transition - Ill Skillz

Contrary to what the press release says, this is exactly what I'd expect if D.Kay and Marcus Intalex were to team up. Using the "Baracuda" school of thought, growling bass is layered over bongo driven beats and hectic percussion for a tight rolling little number. Flip for epic strings and stabby synth leads courtesy of Ill Skillz themselves.

8 J Majik / Wickaman - EP - Infrared

Mmm, lovely, an Infrared EP! Any J Majik / Kathy Brown combination makes you listen up. Throw Wickaman into the equation for 'Lose Control' and the combination come correct once again - massive distorted Reese, runnin' beats, broken breaks, floating synth and of course, Kathy's divine tones. Flip for 'Ska Disco', and I think the name says it all - one to lay in the mix with driving bass and funking breaks. Onto the next slice with 'Mash Up', and one the Full Cycle camp would be proud of - check the swing beat switches. Finally we got 'Snake Charmer'. A disco drum&bass funk out, this is one of those tracks you can't help but move to. The occasional sub stabs round it off perfectly.

7 Wickerman - Thai Sticks EP - Infrared

J Majik's sidekick and award nominee, Wickerman, has produced 4 track EP on Infrared for our listening pleasure. The title features Sylo as co pilot and is a blend of nasty amen, ethnic chanting heavy distorted bass. Track 2, "Dirtbag" is the Wicky one his own and is an aggresive roller with swooping bass on the "Pitch Shift" tip. Side 3 is J Majick's remix of last year's smasher, "Good Vibrations" and it continues where the orginal left off witrh rolling vocals dancefloor bass and tearing drums. Rounding off proceedings nicely is "Mr Smiley" which serves up more rolling drums and synthesised bass.

7 Logistics - Millionaire / Front to Back - Innerground

Straight outta Cambridge via the Brazilian rainforest to Sao Paolo's Innerground comes Mr. Logistics together with his tightly woven beat structure for this 12". 'Millionaire' is the smoother of the two with a subtle funk influence riding deep pads with sporadic dub-like chimes. Flip from 'Front To Back' for a liquid stepper, progressively laced with frenetic congas. There's a nice, albeit brief, respite in the middle before the beats go back in.

8 Digital - Termite / Ready or Not - Innerground

The East-Anglian dub general graces Marky & XRS' imprint here with these two flavoursome slices for your mind, body and soul. 'Termite' comes with a delightful bassline, Digital stylee with a twist. He keeps the break subtle yet strangely complex, adds some cheeky hooks, again delicately applied, and rides that intense bass groove. 'Ready Or Not' brings tribal elements to a futuristic funk jungle soundscape. The beats are worked, the brass is evocative, bass, supreme as ever, sample detail and edits, superlative. Digital doing wonders.

6 Kaleb - Grunt / Havoc - Invaderz

INVD033 brings a couple of tough numbers causing havoc with grunt. On one side Kaleb's opted for an early 90's theme on the strings, throwing in modern-day synthed basslines, stabbing sub and a running break. Flip the script for an ATMospheric synthy intro, heafty b-lines and naughty beats - definitely the strongest side, although both have weight. Also watch out for Audio & Damage's "Subatomic".

8 D Bridge - China Blue / True to the Craft - Liquid V

D Bridge is on fire at the moment with a mixed bag of tunes that all have top-quality production and that little extra sparkle. This debut on Liquid V shows the deeper end of his music, China Blue bubbles along with a bongo break and subtle samples before dropping into a real hypnotic roller, you can really lose yourself in this one. On the flip True To The Craft offers a more spaced out, progressive vibe. This tune oozes warmth and all the elements are extremely well put together. Impressive.

6 Interface & MC Sweet Pea - Jumpin' / Freak On - Lockdown

Next up we two tracks from the Lockdown imprint. "Jumpin" opens with the vocals from Mc Sweetpea and rolls neatly on before dropping into dancefloor style, synthy bass stabs and vocal snippets throughout. Flip for "Freek On" and more danceloor styling and Sweetpea's vocals.

6 Flex - Hear Dis One / Soloman Sound - Mac II

Mac Daddy Randall brings his MAC II label back into the fold. Rattling percussion, a growling bassline and calls of "hear dis one", set it off and create a darkside vibe. The flip is more interesting with its "representing the universe" vox and a B-Movie style influence. A soulful loop filters through before a solid bassline roll and bleeps keep things ticking over.

7 Calyx & Teebee - Cyclone - Moving Shadow

Two highly talented producers drop in on Moving Shadow for the labels best release of late. Bongos and celestial effects create a big wash for starters as the tune drops into tech-funk bassline

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territory. As fans of the duo might expect you can,t fault the production levels on this one. It's backed with Follow The Leader as Eric B & Rakim,s classic vocal is pimped out and twinned with mysterious cinematic strings rolling through to a viral funk bassline and speaker-crunching stepper breaks.

7 X-Plorer & Dee Pulse / Sinthetix - Sahara - Obsessions

Truly a pan-european effort with Germany's X-Plorer & Dee-Pulse meeting the Netherland's Black Sun Empire. "Neurofunk" is the dish of choice with X-Plorer & Dee-Pulse's "Sahara" getting low down and dirty with rumbling bass steady, rolling beats. Flip for BSE's mininal take on Sinthetix's Cryogenix.

7 Raiden / Resident Evil - Bare Knuckle Fight rmx - Outbreak

Cause 4 Concern take on the remix duties for Portsmouth based Raiden's "Bare Knuckle Fight". Military, steppy beats and growling bass weave together for stompy head nodder. The flip see Loxy & Verse rework Resident Evil's "Doomsday Device" in typically nasty fashion with swirly twisted intro sounds and driving beats deep subs.

6 Plejik - Coma / Razorblade Nightmare - Outbreak

Ouch! Deadly evil and filthily tearing is all I can really say to describe 'Coma'. Another one of those that does exactly what it says on the tin - if you're alive it'll put you in a coma yet its enough to wake the dead - death metal-esque drum&bass - smashing Amens, thumping bass, twisted edits… oh my! If that's side one, with a name like 'Razorblade Nightmare' on side two, I'm scared to turn over… but here goes… Mummy! OK, not as terrifying as I thought - a running break, angry driving bass and sinister edits.

7 Tech Itch - Life of Sin / Take the Stone - Penetration

'Life Of Sin' feat. MC Jakes Nightmarish soundscapes on this metal-edged bruiser from Tech Itch. Rattling drums, and satanic vocals from Jakes lead into a pummelling beats and bass horror show. One for the headbangers! 'Take The Stone' showcases Tech Itch with his weapon of choice - the Amen break. Furious underground Amen edits tunnel deep before fizzing bassline riffs fly across the audio space. Filth. Also check for the Dungeon Master rmx of 'The Hand'.

6 Ju Ju - Cool Down / Resting Place - Phuturo

Bubbling intro atmospherics give way to stomping beats, dirty driving leads and dub-style bass and effeets for "Cool Down". Flip for soulful vocals blended with bongo driven breaks, funky sub bass and subtle guitar licks before dramatic horns step up proceedings in "Resting Place".

7 Fierce / C4C / Break - Carrier (Gridlok rmx) - Quarantine

The latest offering from Mr. Fierce's Quarantine imprint teams up the man himself with C4C (albeit remixed by Gridlok) on one side and Break on the other - nice! Gridlok takes 'Carrier' into a tech'd out world of snapping beats, sporadic chops and breaks, deep groaning bass and highly worked effects. 'Foodchain' is an apt title for a track that darks up to the point you feel hunted by the predatory soundscape of intricate beats and growling yet subtle bass.

7 DJ Fresh - Capture The Flag / Twister - RAM

Huge tune - 'Messiah' meets 'Signal' - not utilising beats as its priority, 'Twister' is all about massive bass and that's exactly why this is as dutty as it is. In fact, the breaks are very start/stop, but that doesn't matter one iota, it's all about the bass. Following in 'Twist 'Em Out' / 'Torpedo' vein, 'Capture The Flag' intros with some crazy circus stylee and heavy reece pads. More break orientated, albeit minimal, with lots of varied bass switches "it's like… whoa!"

7 Crystal Clear - Vandalise / Mr Wolf - Reformed

As to be expected from Formation's sister label, new skool dancefloor vibes are the order of the day here. Crystal Clear's second outing sees him team up with Mc Code:Breaker (apparently the MC from Grand Theft Auto's MSX-FM!) for Vandalise, a driving synth bass & noisey drum workout featuring Code:Breakers aggressive lyrics. Flip for stompy, off-key drums and thumping bass. Also watch out for Zen's "Monster Munch".

7 V/A - Rollers EP Vol 5 - Renegade

For those who "Feel Like Jammin", the Holdtight crew has just the formula - a funky rollin' number, deep bass, tight beats and an uplifting groove. Turn over for Basic Operations' 'Today My Love', another crisp delivery from the Renegade team - like they say, "futuristic funk" - melodies and harmonies abound with a subtle vocal and elements of jazz. Onto the next piece and first we got 'Right Now' by Crescent, leading with a strummed bass guitar riff, Motown vox, crafty brass and running beats - adhering to the drum&bass for lovers label… which brings us to 'Lovin' Me' by Davide Carbone & Kubiks - more classic Renegade business, keeping things smooth yet working intricacies throughout, bringing emotional vibes to the fore. Also watch out for "Renegades of Funk Vol.3".

8 V/A - Hardware Chronicles Vol 4 - Renegade Hardware

'Shadows', Unknown Error's epic debut is a sound to behold, so to speak - what a way to introduce yourselves to the listening audience! - Remember when Pendulum hit us with 'Vault'? Well 'Shadows' is a pretty impressive, orchestral first cut from this duo… who appear on everyone's screen with a bleep. Can't wait for their follow-up! Skitty, on the flip, brings old skool flava to 'Fall Down' with tearing breaks, chopping edits and synth from way back when. Spor's 'Haywire' is a deeper number delivering a manic breakfest with slamming synthlines, chops, thundering bass and all sorts - lovely! Last but by no means least, 'Fifty South', by New Zealand's inimitable Bulletproof comes with twisting bass tones over crashing breaks - inspired by months at sea weathering many a storm me thinks. A very strong EP, it has to be said. Also watch out for the tearing "Paranoia Part 2" EP.

6 S.M.O.K.E. - Daroxx (Rascal & Klone rmx) - Signal

Rascal & Klone on a remix tip, are one of those outfits that jump up and bite your on the arse. Here they've done it with a strat-building, deep bass rollin' rework of S.M.O.K.E's 'Daroxx'. Now S.M.O.K.E themselves, from Europe's boot, are giving us reason to take notice and 'Smackdown' is one suggestion of why - contorted basslines and rugged beats make for some techy darkness. Also look out for Motion Theory's Into The Night b/w a Future Prophecies remix.

9 Calibre/ High Contrast - Mr Majestik / Other Side - Signature

You only have to put these two in a studio for five minutes and what do they do? They basically produce a masterpiece! I don't even know what to say about Mr.Majestik. This takes me back a decade, reminding me why we're where we are today - back to the UK's biggest movement since punk - back to the jungle - back to my roots! Light amens, the odd bongo, reggae reverb, the perfect dancehall vocal, a cris' King Tubby brass section, sublime sub and shazam, I got me a money tree. The other side has a very clever name… er… 'The Other Side' - a beautiful piece of music tightly twisted with a dubby b-line and floating vocals - simplistic, to the point and on the mark.

8 Calibre - Hypnotise / The Water Carrier - Soul:r

'Hypnotise' is one of those tracks that does exactly what it says on the tin - more subtle than a feather sledge-hammer, you almost don't realise the tune has played 'til its done - certainly of a hypnotic nature, the sprinkles of piano, gentle sub, vocal snippets and simple break have Calibre written all over them… and that's a very good thing! Upping the tempo on the back Calibre opts for steel drum bass line snappy snare ride in the shape of 'The Water Carrier'. Calibre-tastic.

6 Garon & Seen / Burner Bros - Nervous - Steppasoundz

Swirling intro noises build up to an ominous "There's a price on your head, I'm gonna collect" vocal sample before droping intro reeces and tough driving beats. High point of the tune is the slightly mental swingbeat section which appears after about 32 bars. Flip for a unremarkable reece and amens workout.

7 Drumagick - Can You Dig It / Parah - Subtronix

Stright to the flip, "Parah" with its lush filtered keys, rolling beats and catchy sub bassline create some nice liquid vibes. "Can You Dig It" opens with old skool, rave style stabs and "Can You Dig It" vocal hook layered over tiday, rolling beats. The tune then drops into rolling, upright bass number that's solid but not particularly inspiring.

6 Task Horizon - Monkey Mash / Guardian - Sudden Def

Swiss production duo, Task Horizon, serve up two tracks for Sudden Def and its all about the AA-side, "Guardian" here. Jazzy chords intermingle with steppy beats, floating vocal stabs and rumbling subs. Flip for grimey, swingbeat style tech workout.

7 Probe & Sylo - Drums Like This / Rhythmic Culture - TOV

'Drums Like This' is what you'd expect from this pairing, delivering an absolute ensemble of sound - running breaks creating the vibe, winding edits bringing tons of flava, warping bass taking the stage - you ain't sitting down "when the drum beats go like this". 'Rhythmic Culture' is a ripping blaze up of tight beats, driving bass, filters, beat-structure switches, including a swing beat section, repeated vox and intricate loops - I favour this side.

6 V/A - Here comes Trouble 12 - Trouble on Vinyl

The twelth installment of the "Here Comes Trouble" series brings together the latest talent to sign up to the TOV roster. Holdtight's "Hard Focus" is a distorted sub roller with their usual touch of class to it, Cybin's "Daywalker" is a slow building dancefloor roller. Spor switches proceedings a touch with the twisted "Insecticide", featuring nasty growling leads and clever beat edits. Finally, Lynx & Fatal complete the pack with their steppy, militant "Going Out Of My Head".

8 Dopeskillz - Four Corners EP - True Playaz

You know the artist, you know the label, so lets get down to the nitty gritty. First track, "New Skull" has been sitting pretty in my box for a while and for good reason: in my opinion, this is without a doubt one of Zinc's best pieces if work to date. Trademark rolling beats underpin a sublime "sliding" bassline with jazzy keys and atmospherics to create a smooth rolling slice of funkiness. Sits equally well in a liquid funk set as it does in a more dancefloor set. Flip for "Jeopardy", another roller on a funky tip. On the second disc, side C, we have "Chizzle", with its mellow opening and tight beats, rolling into another funky bassline. Seeing the pattern here yet? This aint a standard tearout EP, this is Zinc exploring funkier territory. The fourth and final cut, "Polkadots" is a bit more lively with apache beats and scatty, stabby bass but still with a layer of funk. As Avid would say, "You will like it, it is warm"!

8 Future Prophecies - Decieved - Under Construction

Here we have the first release from new label, Under Construction, sister of Dogs On Acid Recs for developing artists and material. I have to say if this is developing then the big sister's next release has me salivating already. 'Thunder & Lightning' is dancefloor mash up business, pure and simple – a raga chant, twisted basslines, hefty tearing beats and a punchy hook. After the above, and their release on loosely affiliated BBK, the flip is so far removed from 'Dreadlock' it's hard to believe they've come from the same studio – 'Deceived' is a beautiful piece of work, far more along the drum&bass for lovers lines than any hint of tearing the arse out a dancefloor. I'm loving this tune right now – afraid I don't have information regarding the vocalist or where that delightful sax comes from but this sells the 12" for me.

8 Roni Size - No More ft Bev Knight / Dynamite - V Recs

Here we have a single release from the album (in shops now) of 'No More' with Beverley and Dyna delivering a positive message on a negative problem, attempting to shine light on the dark and overcome. His and her vocals sit delightfully with Roni bringing a beat true to you through a cultured break and sublime guitar riff. In this day n' age such matters shouldn't be of issue but it's sad fact they still are. Luckily this only refers to a minority, but it's a topic of concern none-the-less, and one to stamp out - drop that tough faÁade you're flexin' - you know who you are. A message for the yout' dem… so sit up n' listen. "Put it, put it down."

8 Dillinja - Thugged Out Bitch (Fresh & Adam F rmx) - Valve

The BBK twins make their mark on Valve with the uneviable task of remixing Dillinja's massive "Thugged Out Bitch". This mix keeps the four to the floor flavour of the original but twists things out (see what I did there?) with dirty stabs and floaty atmospherics before heavy stomping subs charge in and ruin your quiet evening. Flip for Dillinja's jazzy introed "Rain Forest".

8 Craggs & Parallel Forces - Fizzt Piglets - Valve

I love 'Fizzy Piglets'. I ate two bags on the spin once and almost threw up. It has to be said that Craggs & Parallel Force's debut on Valve is equally as tasty. Jazzy infuences are the order of day, with a fantastic accoustic guitar lick, jazzy keys layered over heavy Valve-esque bass and beats. The flip, "Thundersoul" is moe of the same with dirty bass. A welcome addition to Valves roster at exactly the time it was needed.

6 Unknown vs Kanye West - Jesus walks in the Jungle - White

Dodgy bootlegs ahoy! Any unprotected acapella is in danger of getting the booty treatment these days and it hasn't taken long for Kanye West's latest effort to appear. Not a big fan of a lot of these bootlegs myself but they certainly are great sellers. This one's fairly average with a pretty uninspiring bassline and rolling beats under Kanye West's lyrical gesticulations.

pic: Cleveland Aaron

diggin in the crates: digital

Satta Dread - U Brown - Kilk

This album was written in the late 70's by a legendary reggae artist U Brown. Growing up whenever I heard my Dad play this album, you could feel the bass vibrating around the whole house. I was only 5yrs old and I can clearly remember not listening to the lyrics in the songs, but being amazed by the bass-lines. Their depth and warmth just had me swinging along to them. The cover artwork for the 'Satta Dread' album was a picture of a Rasta man with a spliff hanging out of his mouth, such a strong image I thoughts it was wicked! I've continued to play this album for over 23 years now and it continues to inspire me to this day.

R.A.W. - Big Daddy Kane - Cold Chillin'

This was around 88' and I was well into my Hip-Hop KRS-One, Ultramagnetics, Mantronix, etc... The early hip-hop production was very experimental but simple, it was the way Big Daddy Kane used his drums and phat break-beats. The first time I heard 'R.A.W.' the intensity of the track it really stuck out for me, banging drums with a super-cool hook, awesome lyrical delivery. Not forgetting that Big Daddy Kane was an original dapper, cool as ice with his hi-top fade and girls draped all around him...Slick!

N.H.S. (Disco Mix) - Doc Scott - Absolute II

I was fully into raving at the time when this track was doing its thing! The Piano hook, crashing amen drums, lush strings and huge dubby bassline had me standing to attention whenever I heard it. If a DJ didn't play it and I'd paid my money to get it to the rave I felt ROBBED! To play it safe I'd only go to rave if Simon Bassline Smith, Doc Scott, Grooverider or Fabio was playing, because it was a definite guarantee as they all battered the track. N.H.S. was truly inspirational to me when I started producing my first tracks Space Funk, etc..

As Nasty as I wanna be - Nasty Habits - Reinforced

I remember going completely mental when I first heard 'Here Come the drums', was in a club with Danny C and it totally blew us away 'we were like what the F*ck is this!' I found out it was on an EP from on of my favourite labels the legendary Reinforced records, this EP had a lot of samples that I could relate to & some I was familiar with. It helped me to understand how to construct my own tracks. When this EP hit the shops I was well chuffed to see that there was 4 blinding tracks including 2 tracks that I was seriously into...RESULT. When they dropped the remix EP what can say. classic business! I believe these 2 EP's are educational to any upcoming producers, do your homework and check this out you won't regret it!

Atlantis - LTJ Bukem - Good Looking Records

This track is simple and soulful, classic amen break played at that BPM sounds excellent. It had everyone hooked girls were loving it so where the guys. This track showed us all that you don't have to make crash bang wallop to please the people. Sometimes some of the greatest tracks ever made are simple but well thought pieces of music.

You held my hand rmx - Marc Mac & Rufige Cru - Enforcers

The quality of this picture disc series from Reinforced amazed me! I managed to buy copies of Enforcers 1,2 & 3 which were all excellent. This particular track had such lush haunting strings and sweet vocals. every time it was played the hairs on the back of my neck would stand on end! The production for this time was second to none, I've a lot of respect for these artists, and what they've stood for musically over the years.

Various LPs and singles - King Tubby - Various

This man has produced for almost everyone who is anyone in Reggae over the years, the legendary Sly & Robbie, The Revolutionaries, I could go on the list is truly endless. Check the production credits of any Reggae-Dub album you'll probably see his name in there somewhere. Digital technology makes life easier for all in this day & age, but all of King Tubby's smooth heavyweight production comes directly from the Analogue sound. Getting to understand the use of analogue technology when dealing with certain frequencies within music production is a unique experience, I'd tell any up & coming producer to give it a go it will surely give their sound a certain warmth.

Rings Around Saturn - Photek - Unknown

When I heard this track it showed me what you can do with serious dedication to your sound & work. This doesn't have the run of the mill drums, sounds or samples, just a definitive sound. Rings around Saturn was soulful, dubby & jazzy, LTJ Bukem, Fabio & Peshay couldn't get enough of it. Having Photek around me at an important time of my career was a huge influence and inspiration to me, and those around me. He's a modest man, and very open, which is nice for someone with his immense talent. Big up!

DIENT BONE

DIESEL : U : MUSIC 2004

dientbone?' I hear the inner city junglist this way, they won the 2004 Diesel-U-or Best Urban Act no less and ATM close and personal. In fact, we were on ges, we voted for 'em, so take it from us, f the award was thoroughly deserved. uch give you the lowdown down below worth mentioning, even though I'm sure become predictably documented, that rtmoor of all places – just where you'd n Award winners to hail from!

ed off Obedient Bone?
r 3 years ago, initially as a studio project d it would be great to take it out live too."

Obedient Bone?
(programming, beats & guitars) Richard (electric & double bass) & Demelza our live set-up anyway, but as we're alists we all produce a wide variety of udio."

ividual specialities / musical histories?
sicians we have all played in many differ- projects spanning/combining several s toured extensively and recorded numer-ns with Spear of Destiny, then got into the d after discovering Mo Wax. Richard Vibration Doctors and also toured solo, spect in the World Music scene, playing Hall and WOMAD. Demelza, who played everal different bands, was pursuing a r career when she was introduced to d through mutual friends."

2004's Diesel-U-Music Awards, what y have separated you from the rest?
s because we have a unique sound and ich is what the award is there to support."

et involved in the competition?
unbeknown to us, sent a three-track ot a call six months later to say we'd won the Urban 2 Award."

The word 'urban' does not epitomise your origin - D&B is widely considered music from 'the street' as opposed to 'the track' - how have you flipped this idea on its head?
"You don't have to be based in a city to make great music! Categories are just invented to make music easier to market and thus sell; admittedly, we were as amused as everyone else when Diesel told us we were 'urban'. D&B is as big in the South West as anywhere else."

Do you think your origin has benefited Obedient Bone's progression and perhaps uniqueness?
"In terms of progression, the whole rural/urban thing has definitely been helpful in getting people interested."

Has your origin inspired you?
"Not being influenced by the ever-changing trends that prevail in city culture has no doubt allowed us freedom to develop our own sound."

Have outside influences / current D&B trends played a part in your sound?
"Our individual influences are pretty eclectic and we share a mutual desire to produce original music that gives us a buzz; we're not too wrapped up in current trends and are equally at home creating chillout as well as dancefloor tracks."

Do the inmates of Dartmoor Prison brock out to your music?
Maybe.

How do you spend your time, studio and otherwise?
We're lucky to be in a situation that allows us to spend as much time as we want to in the studio, so we do! We're currently spending our time working on the next album and rehearsing for loads of live dates in the New Year.

It seems to me, Obedient Bone, along with MC Darrison, has introduced an element of humour, through the 'Tendril' video, to a scene that tends to take itself too seriously, thoughts and reactions?
"Yes!"

Do you have any anecdotes from this shoot?
"No!"

Fair enough! What live stuff have you done and what's in the pipeline?
"We played Fabric earlier in the year and are hoping to get back there again soon. We've presented some great nights in the South West, and have got more lined up (check our website for up-to-date listings). Our last show of 2004 is at The Cavern Club, Exeter on 19th December. Those in London can catch us next at Infinity on 26th January."

What are the moments of which you are proud?
This whole year has been exciting for us. Finishing our self-produced album was a great moment and a realisation of the previous two years hard work. Recognition with the Diesel Award and a page and a half in The Independent further confirmed our belief in what we are doing.

Where do you see Obedientbone going?
2005 will see two Obedientbone LPs in High Street stores near you. We are constantly developing and refining our live show in preparation for next summer's festivals. We're also taking on more remix work.

Anything that I haven't asked but you wanna say? After all, it's your interview not mine:
"We're still unsigned and looking to secure business for our first album (currently available from independent record shops, or direct from www.obedientbone.com). Our website has some audio clips and it can be reviewed at http://www.musicomh.com/albums2/obedientbone.htm (.) Our latest single 'Aware' is out on the 20th December, and we're doing a night at the Cavern, Exeter on the 19th to launch it.

Can I Just say… 'Aware' will be featured on an E-Z Rollers mix CD released by Moving Shadow in February. The website, www.obedientbone.com is due to receive many updates with additional downloads during the following months. Remember; we are fantastic live - so don't miss any of the shows and please book us for more!

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lthebeats

blunted beat reviews

compiled by SOTO & Kingsley Marshall

Breakneck

Freq Nasty

Split Loop

Breaks

Stir Fry - Lectro Chunk - Kilowatt

This is an interesting little number. Think the chunky, controlled and uncomplicated beats of Stir Fry walking through the frenzied neon lit streets of night time Tokyo. This then flies across the pacific to grab a couple of guitar riffs from LA before jetting back in time to Tokyo to sprinkle itself with some shimmering electro synths. You've got a tougher remix on the flip courtesy of Dan F which definitely sounds like him. Good single, original is best though, one of the best yet on Stir Fry wethinks. (4/5) SOTO

Split Loop - Unbelievable - Sinister

Current busy boys of the breaks scene release one of their best tracks to date. That would be this one then? Yes, that's right. I'll try and resist describing anything with the adjective 'unbelievable'. OK so this is really crisp and chunky breaks with an undeniable funk. The live bass sits perfectly and moves around just enough to keep your arse bouncing around the room. Some choice bouncy pipe business really punctuates the track in the breakdown and it kicks back in with excellent energy. There's some little funky guitar riffs as well; good. Sometimes feels like a breaks re-work of 'Pappa was a Rolling Stone'. Kind of. Anyway it's really good and we think you should get one. (5/5) SOTO

Dub Pistols - Official Chemical - Distinctive

Next single from quality 'Six Million Ways To Live' album. Now by all accounts Barry Ashworth is as qualified as any to presribe the 'official chemical' to anyone! And here he does in skanking-dub-funk-chunk style. The original should be on the radio and making everybody ferociously throw their head back and forth on the way to work. The Touche remixes are the little gems here though. Taking off from his 'Soul Shaking' remix this is more of that dirty housey electro beaty vibe that worked so well on his previous 'Pistols re-rub. It's got some almost 'country' gutar sheee-it going too. Which can't be bad. Dogtown Clash remix is also a bit tasty, albeit in a more stripped down, heads down, later on way. And then you've got a Beach Boys, Hawaiian surf rendition that is also highly listenable. Great package. (5/5) SOTO

Invincible - Mean Streets rmxs - Sound of Habib

SOH are one of those foreign labels that have managed to establish themselves into the predominantly British breaks scene. With earlier releases from label boss Johan and Stisch they found their way into many DJs' boxes. (That sounds a bit rude, but believe us we're just talking music here!) The two afforementioned artists have collaborated with vocalists Cajsa John and Marcus Haze to craft an Infusion style vocal lead progressive track. Here we have Future Funk Squad delivering a deep and subtly rumbling take on the original that kind of winds itself up in the breakdown and comes back tighter, more intense and more involving than before. Other remixes come from The Capoeira Twins who decided that they would strip the track right down and add all manner of precussive touches to give it their own twist on both their vocal and instrumental versions. (3.5/5) SOTO

Coded Motion - Chatterbox - Resin

Without being particularly prolific or 'in-yer-face', Resin have quietly carved themselves a little niche as your premier provider of party-time dub-style breaks workouts. After the awesome 'Low Blow' and 'Shinjuku Drop' by label head Taishan we have been steadily provided with punchy little numbers carefully chosen to fulfill the Resin brief. This is no exception. All swing-time a la 'Reclaim the Streets' and 'Bodyrock' with slices of ragga vocals and dub stabs. The drop cascades into an interesting cheeky little synth riff that could almost have been extracted from the 'scary' bit on a deserted fairground in Scooby Doo! If that's not for you then the flip 'Rocka' should be. A bit more serious but with a 'music-box' thing going on as well. In an electro-body-popping stylee fashion. And scratching. Wicky-wicky-wah-wicky-wah-wah-hey! And pitch bent electro synths. It's all good you know! (4/5) SOTO

Lo-Bug - D-Town (Roxziller rmx) - Sober Music

OK, so you may have noticed the name 'Roxziller / Roxzilla' on a recent TCR release and been head-banged into submission by it's out and out guitar frenzy. If not then you need to be informed that this is the coupling of Chris Carter and JHz. That should give you an idea that this is very techy breaks with that slightly 4/4 feel to it. Hold on though. It rolls along very effectively like you'd expect but then drops into this most excellent and unexpected eastern / arabian electrotech synth workout. I don't know if they're feeling the breaks in Morocco, but this is certainly the best way to introduce them to it! (4/5) SOTO

Quest - Get Nasty - Hardcore Beats

We do like it when tunes like this come around. It's very easy for producers to get stuck in their ways and stick to their tried and tested formulas. Although known for his prolific output of heavy bass-lead 'breakstep', (sorry it's an old word but you know what we mean), track he manages to every now and then step out of his particular box and throw something else at us. If you are lucky enough to own a copy of his track 'Egypt' on Pulse then you'll know what we're talking about! Anyway, this particluar track has those crisp snappy drums you'd expect but throws a massive synth bassline under them. It kinda has a techno/electro slant to it but still with the dirty, pokey attitude you want out of a Quest record. Have a listen. (4/5) SOTO

Nitro vs Breakneck - Again - London Breakz

This is one of those tunes that your mum wouldn't understand! "Where's the tune?" she'd say. Well it doesn't need a tune. It's one of those subliminally funky tracks that doesn't really appear to have a lot going on, but it does, somehow! There's one great big fat bouncing superchunk of a beat and a real minimal repeating bass note. Yeah, I know, it doesn't sound all that does it. But it is unusual and will definitely get your head and feet going. (4/5) SOTO

Split Loop - Hot Rock Boy - Supercharged

Oh my, another Splitloop record! There's no favouritism or anything, we just happen to like what they're doing right now! Anyway, to work. Dirty, yes. But in a controlled, rolling fashion, not unlike some Koma and Bones tracks actually. Heads are definitely down, but feet are certainly not still. A persistent bass keeps pushing forward in a relentless mission to move you internally! This is quality, linear, restrained (that's a good thing in this case) and reassuringly filthy. Breakbeats equivalent to Stella Artois! (4/5) SOTO

Freq Nasty - Punkadelic (Radioactiveman remix) - Skint

Mmm, this is very nice. If you're familiar with Radioactiveman then you'll be happy to hear that this is vintage stuff from him. "What does that mean?" I hear all you uneducated ignorami cry. Well it roughly equates to a preponderance of crunchy machined beats with a distincly electro tilt. It also means deep off-key bass harmonics that on their own are beautifully twisted, but combined with the pure vintage synth lines create something definitively man made but quite organic at the same time. (5/5) SOTO

SOTO will be touring Australia and New Zealand in December and January '05 alongside Terry Atomic (Hooligan). Don't forget the SOTO remix of 'Just Be Here' on Supatronix out soon.

Leftfield

Bent - Flavour Country EP - Open

Nottingham duo Simon Mills and Nail Tolliday go all art school on us, with each of these limited edition twelve inches including a one-off print of a series of 500 digital photos they took as part of a project with Olympus. The six tracks successfully splice laid back house with even more horizontal grooves, with the glacial strum of 'I Can't Believe It's Over' our pick of the extended player. KM

Break Reform - Waiting mixes - Abstract Blue

It's been a slow burn for Break Reform, but last year's 'Fractures LP' certainly marked a change in fortunes for the group, whose expertise is in their fusion of different genre, most spectacularly when connecting broken beats with funk and soul sensibilities. Domu's take of the doe eyed 'Waiting,' cuts up the keys, before injecting some shattered percussion and science fiction string work. KM

V/A - The Sound of Club Brasil - Club Brasil

South American aficionado Nik Weston collects together some of the more popular standards from Club Brasil's 'Sangue Latino' and 'Ipanema Set' albums. The ubiquitous 'Casa Forte' is here, together with versions of the Joyce classics 'Aldeia de Ogum' and 'Feminina,' before closing with Mariana Feo's fine rendition of Jorge Ben's loungey, 'Take It Easy My Brother Charles.' KM

Elliot Smith - Pretty (Ugly Before) - Domino

Smith's thinly disguised discussions of emotional upset may be too morose for some, but there's little doubt that he rattled the cages of all those who heard his records, or were lucky enough to catch an acoustic set prior to his death in 2003, through a combination of heartfelt lyrics and an amazing ear for melody. Those who respond to South are advised to turn to this single, or the posthumously released album, 'From a Basement on a Hill.' KM

The Sweet Chop - Speak Easy - No Info

Typically, there's no info on this unsolicited CD other than the title and artist information, which is one of the few singles of recent months to disturb my musical equilibrium. With the title track like listening to The Beegees scuba diving, or The Darkness in a flotation tank, with the singers vocal tickling Minnie Ripperton's range in its rafter raising heights. Turn over for a drunken grunt, which trades blows with a muted guitar line. KM

Bugz in the Attic - Booty La La - V2

It's hard to hit a club or click the radio without meeting this cut from the Bugz. Far ahead of the curve, the latest sounds from the attic rock a genuinely funkadelic flavour, where ticklish basslines find themselves ruffled by the thump of acid subs and swirling analogue pushes. That ain't quite it though, with the unfortunately monikered singer M'Pho running off with the glory in her catlike delivery. KM

A Guy Called Gerald - First Try - K7

With a reputation synonymous with experimentation, Gerald Simpson proved long ago that he was also the master of reinvention. Having ridden the acid house wave both through his solo material and work with 808 State, he pushed the boundaries of jungle with his 'Black Secret Technology' album. This EP reflects his relocation from New York to Berlin, with water-logged electronics throwing sparks from the studio circuitry - rugged house grooves reverberating with the spirit of Detroit. KM

Blue States - Last Blast - Memphis Industries

Something happened over in Memphis a couple of years ago, the label redirecting their existing artists from candle-lit chill to psychedelic rock. Andy Dragazis and his trusty cohorts Chris Carr and Jon Chandler follow the codpiece rock of Fort Lauderdale and double dutch shenanigans of The Go Team, with a humdinger of their own - which busies itself with a sing-a-long school disco smoocher - a set closer if ever we heard one. Welcome to Memphis. KM

BEST AND WORST DJ STORY........

Atomic Hooligan:

Worst DJ experience: Recently I played at Dance Valley in Amsterdam. the person that booked my flight initially booked it from Mancheater at 6.30 in the morning. I was playing in Nottingham the night before and there was no way I was going to catch that flight. So I asked her to re book it from Birmingham. I got the confirmation back that I was flying from Birmingham at 10.30. Then when I got to the airport the girl at check in told me the flight was booked from Leeds. so I had to pay for another flight. Then when I got to Amsterdam I got a text message from my drummer that British Airways had lost his Drums on the way. So without my drummer, I did my set with my beatboxer Shlomo on the smallest stage I have ever seen with no monitors after leaving my headphones in the hotel. Then I get off stage and I'm told that I'm not going to get paid for 2 weeks because my then manager didn't bother giving Dance Valley an invoice. Then to top it all off, my return flight was to Leeds. (I live in Watford).

Best DJ experience: Probably playing in Russia. Its amazing there. St Petersburg is a beautiful city with so many amazing people. I played at an indoor festival called Flashmob at the end of November to 14,000 in a sports stadium. The love that the people show for the music is humbling as you wont find it that kind of enthusiasm anymore the UK. Myself and Jay Cunning are residents at a club there called the Tunnel. And it just gets better everytime we go.

The album 'You are Here' out early 05 on Botchit & Scarper.

hip hop reviews

compiled by Jesse Keene

Non-Thespian

Wu Tang Clan

Pete Miser

Hangar 18

Blueprint - Chamber Music - Weightless Recordings

This Ohio based mc/producer is better known for his work with RJD2 on the Soul Position LP. What we are presented with here is an album full of instrumental beats and vocal tracks put together in a fashion which makes it interesting listening from start to end. The production is hauntingly atmospheric and delivers a nice slant compared to your average run of the mill hip-hop albums. The guest Mc's come in the form of Vast Aire, Aesop Rock, illogic and Windnbreeze which adds a slice of diversity to the album. A good well rounded LP and definitely worth checking out but I doubt it will make everyones classic list.

Pitman - Pit Closure - Son records

Are introductions really in order for this hot beverage drinking, Soot FM listening, Hip-Hop loving miner? Well let's just say he was doing his thing before the GLC reformed. But on a serious point this album has more to it than comedy value. Many things are addressed on here like the state of the Hip-Hop scene in general and it's all done in the usual northern style. My personal favourites on here are "Roads" (brilliant piss take of the man who likes to rap and sing) and also a cover version of the classic "Girls" (originally done by the B-Boys but has a definite impact with the Pitman Redeux). It's a good album with more to the subject matter than you might think plus its funny so you can't lose, Alan Partridge for the pit generation, nuff said….

Non-Thespian - Sanity's Requiem EP - Dealmaker Recs

Straight out of the dungeons of Nottingham comes this slice of strife and suffering, released on the fledgling Dealmaker imprint. Non-Thespian's sound is heavy and dense...real dense, like being stranded on a sketchy boat at night with no way off, heading right on down into the deepest heart of darkness. Dwyz's production is all edgy strings, stifled wails and weird noise's that probably only he can fathom from his twisted little corner. The sheer boom-bip of the break on "BitterHarvest" will be cracking necks wherever played out. Although all the tracks included here are standout, dark, intense and unrelenting...defiantly one for the hardcore. Keep your eye's peeled for Non-Thespian & Dealmaker, 'cos on the basis of this release they're doin' things proper. Available from dealmaker-records.co.uk, or Selectadisc (Notts)

Blockhead - Sunday Séance 12" - Ninja Tune

Strange one this. Blockhead is one of those producers that seem to keep things on an ever-changing level. This 12 offers us atmospheric beats in an up-tempo vein. The A side is an instrumental track which in its self is quite impacting - along the lines of Mr dibbs - while the B side is on a more down-beat vibe and features the vocals of Aesop Rock and Camu Tao. It's a good track in a sense but I found the harmonious hook kind of spoiled it for me. This has got potential but I think it would appeal more to people on the fringes of the Left Field side of Hip-Hop. My advice is give it a listen, you can either take it or leave it.

Vordul Mega - Spitamatic b/w Neva Again - Nature Sounds

I have been eagerly awaiting the arrival of this Mc's debut solo album and if this 12 is anything to go by it should not disappoint. The title track 'Spitamatic' features C-rayz Wallz and has him and Vordul on a call and respond vibe. The beats are in keeping with the NY vibe of production, a bumping track but not a floor filler. But when you flip over to the B side things hit hard. 'Neva again' is a bass heavy stomper in which Vordul deals lyrically with his struggles and strife it's by far the stand out tune and its well worth just checking the 12 on the strength of that. This a good introduction to what this guy is capable of and should wet your appetite for the full length LP….

Wu Tan Clan - Disciples of the 36th Chambers - Sanctuary

This latest offering from the Clan supreme is not only an album but is also an enhanced CD ROM which features 2 videos (what they are I will not tell, if you buy it you'll find out). What I'm gonna deal with here is the music. It's a live album recorded in San Beradino, CA and has all the old favourite's on there Bring Da Ruckus, C.R.E.A.M., etc. What makes it different is the format that it has been presented in. As its live you get a real sense of actually attending a Wu show although you cannot see them you do get the feeling of interaction between the Wu and the crowd, plus they have chosen one of the best Wu-Tang live sets to show case. This is a must for all fans and well worth checking if you have been on the fence about this Staten Isle crew since the release of Wu-Tang Forever. It seems that the statement that they are nothing to FCUK with is really gonna stick with this release……

Pete Miser - Scent of a Robot - Ho-Made Media

When I 1st got this I was stupid enough to make a judgement on the style of the cover alone, also he is Dido's tour DJ so forgive me for being slightly dubious. My mistake. This 12 is full of surprises. The title track deals with the subject of being a robot but not knowing until someone e-mails you to tell you - sounds nuts - but it really is a banging tune, the beat is hard and has you thinking who the hell is Pete Miser cuz this rocks. The flip side is also a treat. So Sensitive is another up beat banger of a tune, you think that it might be some la shmoove love track, but no, this is all about sensitivity to the mic. It all works really well if not a little odd, don't make the mistake I did as this is not one to be slept on. You can actually quote me on that….

Son Records - The Last Word compilation 1998-2004 - Son

This compilation is a documentation of the above labels 6yrs in existence. An independent affair, which has seen the likes of Hunt-kill-bury Finn, Cappo, Scorzayzee and Stylie Cee have successful releases through the watchful eye of the Son Buddha. With this compilation you get a chance to be taken through some old and new tracks from the aforementioned artists plus new shizz from Def Tex, C-mone and Wordsmith. It's a good piece of material with enough diversity to give the whole thing longevity and being that it serves as an almanac of sorts it does give it some depth as you can get the sense of Hip-Hop progression as you pass through the years. Impressive stuff that is a must for all. Check yer local vinyl pusher for details…

Hangar 18 - The Multi-Platinum Debut Album - DeF Jux

Nice title don't you think? I had the record shop peeps look at me funny when I asked for this by name but when you hear what's contained within its vinyl walls you have to face a bit of public confusion. This is the 1st full length release from the Hanger 18 crew which have their own unique taste and sound. It's a mixed bag of heavy bass, Synthesised riffs, Turntablism (Just a dash of), and intricate lyricism. This may not be to everyone's liking but I think it has a broad appeal and also features a guest appearance from Sadat X. The rest of the album is held up by the group. Which is refreshing to hear as it seems to be the norm these days that everyone and their Nan is on the mic. Heavy sounding scientifical boombox hip-hop that deserves your attention immediately….

Haiku D'etat - Coup De Theatre - Decon

Ok this is not to be confused with a French theatre group, in fact it is far from that. This is a project brought to us by freestyle fellowship veterans Aceyalone, Abstract Rude and Mikah 9. And it's an interesting piece of music. It's hard to define this release as it covers straight up hip-hop tunes through to jazz driven loops all with some amazing word play thrown in for good measure. This cannot necessarily be to everyone's taste due to its slightly disjointed vibe. On the plus side it has a lot of potential as a grower. The beats are well produced and it has a varied content due to the nature of the music and the versatility of the Mc's involved. Check out the track featuring Blackalicious, Lyrics Born and Lateef (Latyrix). It's a nice banger of a tune done in the Quanamn vein with a twist. Its solid stuff that is worth a listen but a try before you buy is advised…..

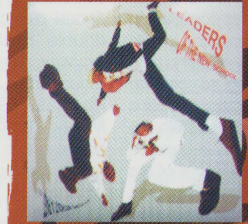
Stones Throw 101 DVD & Mix CD - Stones Throw

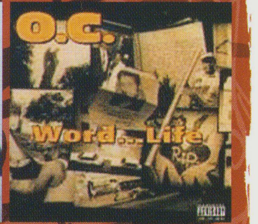
Well as I said before no DVD player at my yard so this review is purely based on the mix CD. The DJ in control of the wheels of steel is the man know as P-Nut Butter Wolf, the music that he is showcasing is Stones Throws classic releases. The result is seamless Hip-Hop infused with funky breaks and a bit of soul. Featuring tracks from Quasimoto, Rasco, Cut Chemist, Koushik, Stark Reality and many more. This is something for those Sunday afternoons. It's not too heavy and it ain't too light its "just right". Fair enough it ain't nothing that you have never heard done before but you definitely have not heard all these tunes (42 of them) mixed in such an appealing manner. A real treat for fans old/new of the Stones Throw label. Plus the DVD features some good videos on all accounts but you have to let me know about that, comments on a post card please…

Kyza - Real Rap b/w Devil in a Red Dress - Kemmet Recs

Heavyweight rhymes are the order of the day when it comes to Kyza and this point is put to the test and proved on the opening track "Real Rap". A savage stabbing beat which has your attention from the word go, then you're drawn to the lyricism and pace of Kyza's flow. Its a cracking tune which leads you nicely on to the B-side, Devil in a Red Dress. This tune is more down beat with the atmospherics of a private eye movie. The story/plot is well told and the word play is second to none. A strong 12" which deserves a listen. Its a case of don't ask for Diamond P.I. cuz kyza's running things now.

CHECKING DA CRATES: CLASSICS / RE-ISSUES





Leaders of the New Skool - Future without a Past - Traffic

This was the 1st debut outing for the crew that consisted of a young Busta Rhymes, Charlie Brown and Dinco-D. What you have musically is hip-hop from the early 90's well produced and (dare I say it?) up lifting and also conscious to a degree. Dealing with the daily high school life of the aforementioned Mc's you are taken through the trials and tribulations of not having a car (Sob Story), dealing with the neighbourhood bully (Show me a hero) and also not forgetting the P.T.A (Just another Case of the…..). Its light-hearted stuff but is well worth a listen for the sake of nostalgic value or just to get your self acquainted to the whole L.O.N.S. vibe in general. Either way it rocks and well deserves a re-issue, get yer ears on a copy soon as…..

O.C. - Word... Life - Wild Pitch

When D.I.T.C member O.C first released this album it was about as hard to get hold of as a cigarette in a house of straw. This was due to the labels ongoing problems, which we will not delve into at this point. Nevertheless, the album was bootlegged then deleted. Which was a complete Sh1t for all those who had not managed to pin down a copy. Its not the fact that it's the best album you have never heard but it has got some real gems on there like the moody sounding O-Zone and the Classic Times up. Now we see it having a re-issue with a full cover. If you are a fan of D.I.T.C you will no doubt be aware of this album but if you have not yet heard this elusive LP then I highly recommend you do. Not all the tracks are bangers but when O.C. drops heavy he drops HEAVY. Classic NYC Hip-Hop just the way yer like it…

drum & bass

➲ klute - no-one's listening...

commercial suicide 9

Just when I was starting to recover from the last Klute LP he's back with another one, full of a whole host of totally original breakbeat excursions for us to feast upon. Consistently pushing things forward, this LP delves into territories that didn't exist before, taking influences from 80's electro, Soul, Old School Jungle and Detroit Techno. Each track stands out and deserves to be discovered in turn, from the soul-drenched collaboration with Marcus Intalex 'Make A Stand' to the anthemic, '95 flavour of 'Saviour'. 'Time For Change' is a dense, brooding piece with intertwining b-lines, 'Stuck OnYou' takes a thundering amen and merges it with sunshine keys and an 80's style vocal and 'Crosby' is Klute at his most sublime, full of echoing keys, heart-wrenching vocals and a perpetuating b-line. Available on a neat, 4-piece vinyl this is an LP that shouldn't slip through anyone's fingers, and a certain contender for album of the year.

➲ v/a - rare grooves

bassbin 9

Bassbin has been one of those labels that has just crept up on the scene creating a quiet revolution, which has now developed into a full on movement. This 1st compilation LP is a showcase of tracks from the whole Bassbin, dub-wise crew, and is all brand new material that I've been itching to get my hands on. Skitty's 'Sweet Vibrations' opens proceedings in fine style with a switch in the middle that bursts into a bouncy reggae b-line and a frenetic break. The highlight of the LP has to be Calibre's 'Can't Stop This Fire', already an anthem, soaked in happy rebellion like a Marley classic, and with his trademark vox sample twisting at its best. Breakage is of course present with another Alias track 'Long Time' (alongside Flight) which is a soul-soaked amen feast, and a solo track 'Rise', a highly emotive piece in a similar vein to 'Stoneheart'. Equinox's 'Don't Wanna Hurt You' is another 95'esque killer, combining the early Metalheadz sound with a touch of hardcore and off-beat, dub b-lines. Digital features with 'Lucky 7', as always coming at the dub-wise sound with a totally raw vibe, with tumbling apache breaks and a plundering, analogue bassline. Seba & Lenk complete this excellent compilation with a brand new track called 'Everyman', on a fairly minimal vibe with some superior production and a sublime vocal from R. Manos. 'Rare Grooves' is one of those LPs that will definitely stand the test of time, and is a testament to the this ever-progressing label's ear for boundary-breaking music.

➲ v/a - spectrum

valve 8

Now, you know the Valve system is all about quality control? And that's a rhetorical question - Dillinja & Lemon wouldn't let anything slip through the net if it doesn't contain blatant traces of their trademark sound - well the beats on 'Spectrum' are inevitably phat throughout, but this album is not your conventional Valve long player. In days gone by you've come to expect a Valve LP straight outta the front mans vault. Well 'Spectrum' comes with a twist - Lemon & Dillinja have spent recent times wisely loading Valve's smoking gun with producers they feel worthy of the system so to speak... and 'Spectrum' is the result with all dem on wax n'CD for y'all. The Valve nu skool includes Friction & Nu Balance, A-Sides, Craggs & Parallel Forces, TC and Dan Miracle, 'longside the head honchos themselves. As its title suggests, this album caters for the spectrum of drum&bass with the dubby 'Exodus'.

➲ v/a - dubplate killaz

ganja recs 8

Unless you've been living under a rock in Accrington Stanley for the past year then you've definitely heard the title track... a lot. Well this is the whole goddamn album mixed up for y'all by label bossman, DJ Hype. As ever, Hype does an awesome job airing tracks that need to breathe, together with his inimitable scratching stylee 'longside the various soundbites and samples now synonymous with studio Hype, Hype, Hype. There's nuff phat beats on here to make you salivate all over your CD player, but I know some of you prefer to dribble on your decks. Those pining for vinyl; you're getting three double pack vinyl releases very soon. Anyway, the track listing is heavy with tunage from J Majik, Wickaman, DJ Hazard, Phantasy, Shodan, Pascal, (Rude Boy) Monty, Potential Bad Boy, Ebony Dubsters, not to mention Hype himself. Vocalists featuring on various tracks include DJ Daddy, UK Apache, Yush, MC Det and Daddy Earl. In addition to the two Hype, J Majik, Wickaman & DJ Daddy tracks (in shops now on picture disc) standouts include Si Smith & Drumsound's tasty remix of Phantasy & Shodan's 'Gimme Da Gal' feat. UK Apache, Potential BadBoy & Yush's delightful 'Your Mine', the disgusting Shimon remix of 'You Must Think First' and 'Crowd Says Reload' by Potential BadBoy feat. MC Det. All round killaz for the junglist - get both the mix CD and vinyl releases if you ask me.

➲ v/a - paranoia part 2

renegade hardware 7

You can always rely on the TOV Music Group's regularity when it comes to single, EP and LP releases, as they constantly drop the bombs in whatever shape or form is required at the time. Well, here we got another CD project backed by EP release for your ears. Check our drum&bass reviews for news on the EP itself... here we're dealing with the mix, this time courtesy of the closest you'll get to Keyser Soze's nemesis, Mr. Keaton. "Keaton was a grounded guy... nobody argued with Keaton... Keaton always said..." "There's nothing that can't be done." The intro... Gridlok's 'Paranoia' remix (on the EP) is just the beginning - so if this is your sound then you'll love this set - along with The Militia's tune there's more tasty reworkings including Hive's popular 'Haters' relick and Raiden's 'Fraggle Rock' remix. Heavy Hardware hitters; Ink, Universal Project, DKay, Evol Intent, Phobia, Spor, Loxy, Dylan, Paradox and Keaton (the producer) all feature in full; (the DJ) "Keaton put on the finishing touch... delivering nineteen darkside renegade rollin' bass n'drum breakers to your broken head. Even with Raiden's 'Utopia' and 'Arch Angel' this is more aural embodiment of the anti-Christ epitomised by 'The Blood' (Evol Intent) for example - Spor's 'Nebulous' is pretty sick too. Are you tough enough to overcome your fear and handle the paranoia? "The only thing that scares me... is Keyser Soze... and like that... he's gone."

➲ v/a - progression sessions 10

good looking 9

This time round the inimitable Progression Sessions with LTJ Bukem 'longside MC Conrad comes live down on tape (well, CD) from Munich, Germany. You can put your house on the fact that a Progression Sessions CD will be one of the most listenable CDs in your collection, and this latest Munich number is no exception. Bukem's selection and mixterity is sublime, Conrad's lyrixterity is, as always, absolutely superb. In fact, a special treat early on is Conrad's live rendition of the superb 'Golden Girl', the huge tune on which he's laid down lyrics for Makoto. In addition to Makoto bits, the lieutenant mixes together joints from Kymera, Catch 22, Ill Logic & Raf, Stress Level & TC1, Mathematics & Tactile, ICR and Basic Operations, starting off with the 'Organ Tune' by Perth's (Aus) Greg Packer. It's always amazing to hear the beginning of a live Prog Sesh CD with the crowd in awe of the inseparable duo's reputation, and the thing is, they constantly perform at events like this worldwide, not all of which are recorded (in fact nowhere near), and they command a huge following every time in every corner of the globe. The Bukem / Conrad / Prog Sesh formula is one of the most consistent, genre-spanning, crossover-friendly drum&bass acts there is. The Good Looking camp's current discography is held so close to their chest that either a Progression Sessions Live or a Progression Sessions Live CD is pretty much the only place you can hear it... and no one flexes it like the bossman himself. Furthermore, no one rocks it like his partner in crime; this is the Bukem & Conrad show, each and every time.

➲ cyantific - hospital mix 4

hospital 8

Ah, the fourth instalment in Hospital's Mix series - lovely! Cyantific's taken control of this one and what a mighty fine job has been done, I must say. Starting with High Contrast's seminal 'Twilight's Last Gleaming', this sets the pace for a mix that won't be leaving your CD deck in a hurry - one of those you can listen to pretty much anywhere on any vibe. Cyantific's mixing is tight and totally to the point, of course throwing in a couple of Cyantific bits for good measure - and measure up they do, 'longside a fine selection from the likes of Logistics, Commix, SKC, Danny Byrd, Syncopix, Nu:Tone, Q Project, Child Support, Laroque and the aforementioned High Contrast. Logistic's 'Spacejam' is a real treat, as is the VIP mix of SKC's 'Free My Soul' and Cyantific's own awesome 'Little Green Men', along with previously unreleased tracks 'Three Bags Full' from Nu:Tone, Logistics' 'Through The Looking Glass' and the wind up tune, 'Visitations' courtesy of Laroque. Look out for this at the end of January, buy on sight and fling it in your player, stat.

➲ v/a - thought process 01

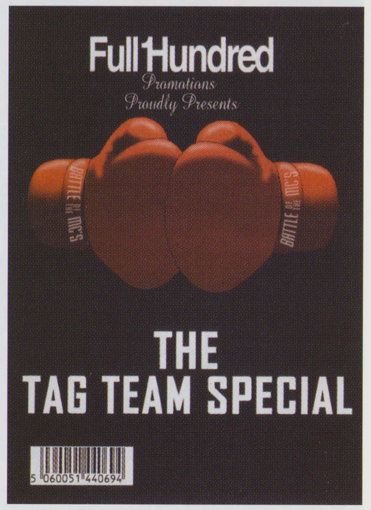
covert operations 8

Now, I'm going to Thailand next week and this album from Covert Operations & Warm Communications is coming with me. Here we're talking experimentation, coupled with dancefloor friendliness – these tracks aren't dancefloor slammers by any stretch of the imagination but you can hear how they'll work on that platform as well as the beach or Full Moon Party. Farcical tags such as intelligent, ambient, and atmospheric aside, this is definitely a break from the norm – alternative stylee from the likes of Analytic, ASC, Cable, Cartridge, Graphic, Mav, Orion, Probe-One, Psidream & Resound, and Vector Burn. This comes as a double CD package. CD1 is full of remixes by a selection of the above. It's all about soundscapes as far as I'm concerned. On here you'll find influences from electro through trance to jazz funk. I'm psersonally a big fan of the first tune, Orion's remix of ASC's 'Numatic'. CD2 comes fully mixed up by Warm Communications' front man, EHL. Check his weekly show on BassDrive.com for more of this flave.

➲ v/a - nightvision 2

infrared 7

Back into the mix CD fray for the second instalment of Infrared's 'Nightvision' series, this time blended up by the blooming Wickaman, currently smashing it on the production tip, be it solo, 'longside Infrared label boss man J Majik, collabing with the likes of Sub Focus or who knows what – either way, he's very busy at the moment but still finds time for a studio mix up. This is none-stop Infrared business with Wickaman flinging down a massive selection of the past year or so's Infradiscography. Intro-ing with 'Snake Charmer', straight into 'Ghost' then 'Swallow Ya Soul', you get an idea of where Wicka's going with this. This one's kept bubbly to the max, accompanied throughout by the effervescent vocal delivery of MC 5Alive. A few other tracks of note include; 'Ring Of Fire' with that amusing Nemo sample, the huge danceflor smasher, 'Scooby Doo', 'Blind Cobblers Thumb' and 'Capoeira', need I say more about that track? If you're looking for unreleased material then maybe this aint for you, but ultimately, nearly everything that's unreleased is eventually released anyway. The CD reflects all of Infrared's artist select; tune-wise you've got the lot, Wickaman and Five Alive work well, so all in all this is a tight little mix CD.



➲ v/a - destruction ritual

tech freak 7

Keep your eyes and ears open now for this five-piece vinyl album from the vault of Dylan & Tech Itch's combined label, Tech Freak Recordings... and this is for those who are... tech freaks that is. If you like it dark and nasty this will be your cup of tea... with a twist of cyanide and a dash of snake venom. The combination of words 'tech', 'freak', 'destruction' and 'ritual' pretty much describe what you should expect here. Tech Itch combines with MC Jakes for a couple of numbers. 'Soldiers' get another workout from Dylan & Robyn Choas – ouch! I wonder what it's like in their house? Dylan also works with BKey and 'Slave To Life'. BKey gets involved with Loxy on 'Battlescars'. Loxy & Bad Company unite for 'Clown Killa'. Gotta say I'm loving Cause4Concern's 'Mind Killer' with its soft floating, yet haunting introduction and breakdown. You kinda know something sick is gonna happen though – it's like a horror movie where the bad guy's seemingly been killed but you know otherwise. Paradox, Concord Dawn, Kryptic Minds & Leon Switch also itch their tech to round off a naughty outing from the camp of ravens and such like.

➲ v/a - straight outta lesta

reformed 7

The Formation camp's chief administrator, budding producer, promoter and DJ, Mr. APB appropriately heads up Reformed Recordings' 'Straight Outta Lesta' long playing mix CD, representing that Leicester sound to the max. Fittingly intro-ing with Nero's next drum&bass homage to the almost un-homage-able 'Thus Sprach Zarathustra', 'Space 2001', APB flexes his skills behind the wheels of steel throughout this tight and electrifying mix. Don't you just love it when they're tight and electrifying? Anyway... the multi-tasker has got some multi-deck business going on here y'know, dropping an array of beats from the midland's contingent including 'Champagne Cocktails', 'Contact', 'Monster Sound' and 'Atomic' by (the artists formerly known as) Generation Dub, Twisted Individual's 'Rusty Sheriff's Badge [ez]... and his 'Poo Tash'... and his 'Cock Snot' for that matter. APB spins his own debut release, 'Sing It With Me', plus bits from the Formation big boss, DJ SS, including a versus against Good Friday, some joints from Zen, Jay Dan, Rob Sparks and Dirty Fingers, rounding things off with a touch of 'Soiled Snatch'. All in all, APB tears up the studio. This CD is well worth getting hold of, especially for those that know the 5HQ. Plus, if you live in the centre of England and aint representing your crew then Twisted will find you, dress ya in his gimp mask and give you a poo tash.

➲ v/a - under the counter

3d mode 6

I had prepared myself for something quite generic and was relieved to hear far more variety than expected – OK, everything tune-wise on here is pretty damn tough but it's not got that standard bassline emphasis I had been bracing myself for. That's not to say having a style, however generic, is a negative thing when it comes to production for example – but a mix with all the same stuff gets tiresome – this however is far from that. Hazard's selection is tidy and his mixing, tight – you could imagine an event going off to this mix – you won't be listening to this while you... er... screw... unless you intend some angry screwface not-love-making, Michael Huchence stylee; drum&bass for lovers this is not! It will however, keep you awake in your car driving back from an event in the wee hours. There's plenty of 3D Mode's own bits laid down in the mix, with loadsa stuff from DJ Devize & Three A. There's also a fair few bits from Hazard himself... well his label, Radius, at least. With other bits from No Noise, Telepathik, Broken Recordings and 4Ward Records you've got a fair idea of what to expect. There's certainly nuff darkness throughout but Hazard keeps the flavour runnin'.

eclectic

➲ ammon contact - infinity of ways

ninja tune 6

LA duo Carlos Niño and Fabian Ammon are Ammoncontact who dash down some minimalist instrumental, hip hop based grooves on their debut LP. They have worked with DJ Shadow, Cut Chemist and King Britt.

'Dreamy' is eases us in with shades of Atjazz, then 'Healing Vibrations' is dreamy percussive. 'Through the Moon' is beatsy, and 'Wu Wu Woomp' has shades of Bugz in da Attic with its off key b-line.

'Good Life to Groove' comes of as Matt Herbert offshoots, but 'Like Waves Of The Sea' is some funky spliffed out cop show material, rounded of by 'Ballad Of The Untitled' gets a bit edgy with flecks of DJ Shadow. A short album, nothing great but not bad either. (PV)

➲ ame - ame

sonar kollective 8

The Jazzanova boys at SK have rounded up another winner by signing Berlin duo Beyer and Wiedemann, aka Ame (French for soul). A great debut album - working that nu-jazz electronic vibe with considerable style. From the funky beats of 'Sun Sugar' to the jazzanova styled 'Tonite', the pair do well. The moody dub of 'Ojomo' is a tad weak, and 'Sarai' is over retro-ed, things get up to speed with 'Hydrolic Dog' while 'Shiro' is close to being my favourite track of the year. An excellent album and a pair to keep an eye on. (PV)

➲ v/a - southport weekender 2

susu recordings 7

Since last year's awesome compo, the SuSu crew rope in big hitters Blaze and Joe Clausell.

Disc 1 has Blaze covering all things soulful and housey, who throw their two quality cuts 'Moonwalk' and 'We Are One' into the mix. From vocal US garage from Kim English to the disco nod of Nicky P's 'Breath of Fresh Air' and the distinct sounds of Kenny Bobien in 'Hiya Luv'.

Clausell's disc 2 has a slow opening with Chris Brann's 'Journey to the Centre' then into some soul and house with Frank Rodgers and touching disco with the Passion Dance Orchestra, then latin in Divinity's 'Find a Way' Dennis Ferrer's 'Sandcastles' take it tribal along with Joe's rework of Ustad Khan's 'Say Aji' It's more diverse and laid back butless good than disc one. Overall better than average, but not as good as last year, and Blaze's recent 'Found Love' mix on Kickin is superior.

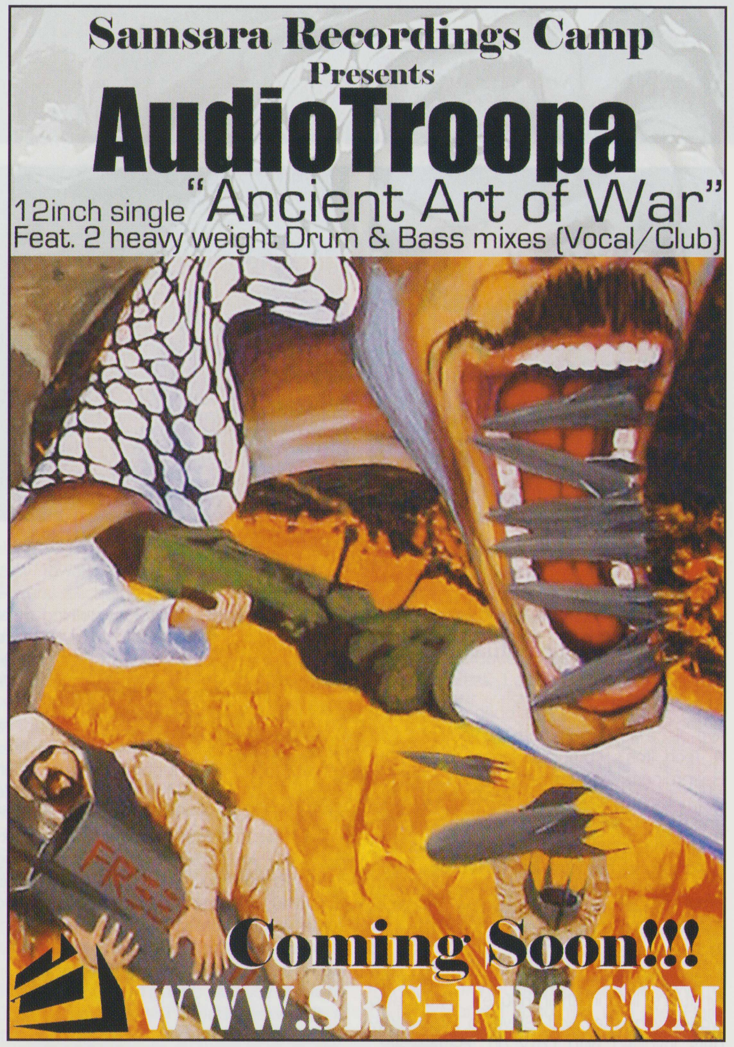
drum & bass dvd's

➲ code of the streets 8

Content-wise this DVD has some serious balls – finish-product-wise I'm not gonna 100% guarantee premium quality, simply because the promo version I had went on a couple of skippin' tangents here and there – I was, however, watching it on an aged computer as opposed to a DVD player – like I say though, this was purely a promo we were sent, well in advance of the DVD being [to use a musical term] mixed down and mastered – chances are the end product is as good as any other DVD... either way, like I said, content-wise this DVD is the mutt's nuts and worth purchasing no matter what. I'd go as far as to say Code Of The Streets will be a valuable asset to your D&B wisdom, and ultimately a collectors item down the track. Anyway, to give you a likkle lowdown, this DVD is a collection of interview style features, just like here in ATM, except it's live. The multi-tasking Jho Oakley – DogsOnAcid boss man, BBK label manager, journalist, etc, etc. – does a great job interviewing key faces of the scene. There's a major Ram Records feature, with Jho talking, at reasonable length, to every Ram member, old and new, including an extensive and enlightening interview with Andy C and Red One. Jho also chats to Dan Fresh in his studio, which gives you an insight into the development of a label, namely Breakbeat Kaos. Then there's John B... and Dynamite MC who lays down a few lyrics in Jho's ear (so to speak) for good measure. Also on the interview tip is G2's Nexxi who talks to Brockie, Artificial Intelligence, the Technicality crew, Raiden, Pyrotechnic's web radio lot with Filthy Dirty Rich living up to his name chewing gum into the mic [amusing], plus MC Verse, Loxy and Keaton. Keaton takes on interviewer duties for some studio insight with Dom & Roland. We go on the road for a night's work with Nicky Blackmarket. Nexxi goes to Homelands and chats to pretty much everyone who's there of note. She finishes up chatting to Taz. All in all a tight product, well worth the money; buy on sight I say.

➲ the tag team special 6

This aint a bad DVD – I guess you need to be a big MC fan, and I know there are a lot out there, to really appreciate this. Personally I found the main feature quite hard work – a lot of noisy generic MCing, albeit to a very responsive crowd. I guess however, the 'Battle Of The MCs' stage is set for the "it's all about me" attitude, but you just get that feeling some of these (almost wannabe) MCs demand the limelight rather than earn it – I dunno how much the battle leaves the less-talented behind – surely a battle suggests winners and losers? Seems like the losers always get another shot! Generic is the only word I can use to describe them! Skibadee, the originator, paved a path too many far less competent others have followed. Of the MCs featured a breath of fresh air comes in the shape of Fats, Fearless when he doesn't have to compete, same goes for Fatman D there, the Ragga Twins with their unique flavour, 'longside Navigator and Spyda. From the presenters point of view, Lennox definitely brings some much needed amusement to this DVD; delivering the jokes with a touch of Essex laddism; 'longside MC Raw (doubling up the Benfleet represenatation) and JJ looking mighty tidy – she comes across proficient in her interviews too, and is far more easy on the eye than many of her interviewees. I personally found the individual interviews far more refreshing than the main feature, and certainly more rewarding and informative. As ever, the articulate Navigator supplies the goods lyrically both on stage and in his personal interview. He always seems like he has something worthwhile to say... not just self-promotion and the typical "yeah I've been in it for this long, I'm the original, we've been spars since way back when, etc, etc. The Ragga Twins do mention that however, but they're fully entitled to because they actually have been in it since day dot. The piece with MC Spyda (the black tarantula) was an extremely inspirational interview – his approach, modesty and humble attitude made for very interesting viewing – then he freestyled and it impressed me to say the least [check his lick(s) with Pendulum on their forthcoming album]. There's also an interview with Shabba D that I'm sure will have fans chomping at the bit.



NEWS

Nintendo DS

The long awaited handheld Nintendo DS is out before the end of November in the USA, and should hit these shores sometime early in 2005. With its two screens - one of them being a touch screen and healthy wave of new titles including Tiger Woods 2005, The Urbz, Madden 2005, and Ridge Racer; expect this to be the 'must have' accessory for the beginning of 2005. Bare celebrities have endorsed it and Nintendo are really pushing it a trendy young audience, so expect this one to fly off the shelves. The features on it are very cool with wireless connectivity and voice recognition incorporated as standard and it ships with a chat program and it's rumoured that developers are wetting themselves to develop games that utilize all this extra functionality. On top of all that it's compatible with the Gameboy Advance and has loads of expansion options for accessories; trust me when I say this shit right here is hot!

FIFA Interactive World Cup

Possibly one of the biggest gaming tournaments ever is the console version of the World Cup, is ongoing at the moment - the UK finals have taken place already and the UK's representative is 22yr old Paul Gordon from Croydon; obviously a true sofa surfer, he'll be repping the UK in Zurich on the 19th of December in the finals. It certainly looks like we got a lot better chance in the computer version than winning the real one; and this is the shape of the future as the ranks of professional gamers grows bigger and bigger.

CELL processor

Here on the ATM games page we don't like to get too geeky on the technology front but having read about this new CELL processor we thought you should know. Without going too deep this is basically a chip developed together by IBM, Sony Corporation, Sony Computer Entertainment, and Toshiba that will revolutionise processing. It is basically way, way more powerful than the most powerful chip any of you may own; and will be used in the new wave of high-definition TV's as well as new consoles and PC's, to name just a few of its uses. Expect super realistic 3D games in massive online environments, that can be played by hundreds if not thousands of people at once .....deep.

REVIEWS

Halo 2 (X Box)

Oh my gosh.... Danger! The most anticipated game ever has finally arrived and its tremendous; people queued for over an hour to get there copy at midnight on the release day, sickies were pulled and bunking of school was standard. $125 million was take on this game in the first hour in North America alone!! This is definitely one of the best games out there; they've sharpened up the super smooth playability of Halo, and added some extra moves and options including online functionality. As with everything that is hyped to this degree people always expect more than is actually delivered; but this an extremely playable game. I have to say that the best element is the addition of online play, as playing against up to 15 other players is really where this type of game comes into its own. However if you are foolish enough not to have got online yet then it is still totally worth having as the Campaign mode is very good, although I would have liked it to be a bit longer. And although you could aim a number of criticisms at this sequel on the whole they are quite minor when you consider the magnificence of this game and the additions that they have made work really well. Not the best sequel ever, and over-hype never helps but this is still a must have for Christmas.

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas (PS2)

Talking about sequels, we've got another one in the form of the latest installment of the GTA series; and this is how you do it properly. In my mind this is essentially the best one player game ever; GTA: Vice City was spectacular but this is at least three or four times as big; and much, much deeper. There is just so much stuff to do in this game, robbing, pimping, killing, fighting, joyriding, fucking, stealing, gang banging, racing, shooting; basically if its illegal then you can do it in this game. And to top it all off the theme of it is loosely based around gangsta hip-hop and the culture around it, there's all kinds of subliminal references to Boyz N The Hood, Juice, New Jack Hustler and more. Oh and the soundtrack is absolutely banging, with fat hip-hop classics from 2Pac, Dr Dre, NWA, Masta Ace, Public Enemy and more; as well as a wicked selection of classic house and reggae amongst other things. This game is just out and out fun, your parents probably wouldn't approve no matter how old you are; but that's half of the appeal! This is an absolutely must have game; the only criticism you can aim at it is that it has no multiplayer appeal - everything else is basically as good as it gets.

Pro Evolution Soccer 4 (X Box)

The latest edition of the worlds best football game has finally landed for X Box (and PS2); we are massive fans of the series and this one has been wiping the floor with EA's FIFA series for a while now. This is a reasonable sequel and they have definitely brought things on a bit with the look and complexity, however it does feel that it's not quite as playable as PES3. FIFA 2005 is the best ever in that series and this edition of Pro Evo is not as big an improvement as in the past; so the gap has definitely closed. However I would still suggest that this is probably the best football game ever, with PES3 taking a close second. If you are unfamiliar with this game it has the full array of features and options to play a variety of different modes, edit teams, players, create your own team, playing online (on Xbox) and pretty much everything you would want from this type of football games.

Grand Theft Auto (GBA)

The GTA series just got mobilized; now you can rob, kill and steal on the move! This is a very good dame and is a rough translation of the first in the GTA series. It's not a game that is terribly well suited to the small screen of the GBA but it is still very playable and definitely a good laugh. Many GBA games are quite childish and sanitized but this is definitely one of the best games for an older audience available on the GBA. This is really a very good conversion job, and definitely worth getting if you are a fan of the series.

X Men Legends (X Box)

As a big fan of the X men cartoons as a yuteman, I always am pleased to see a review copy of a related title drop through the hallowed ATM postbox; and I was seriously excited about the prospect of a four man co-op gamebased in the world favourite mutants. This game is seriously deep with a combination of arcade and role-play elements where you can build your characters up with experience points and various power-ups; whilst most of the actual gameplay is in an arcade style. I was slightly disappointed with this game as although the graphics and actions are very fluent the top down/isometric viewpoint is difficult to get to grips with and can be frustrating when trying to find the way forward. Overall this game is OK, not a classic by any means but a reasonable addition to the X Men catalogue.

Tony Hawks Underground 2 (X Box)

The next in line of the revamped Tony Hawk series; this basically takes off from where Tony Hawks Undergound (THUG) left off; combining the classic tricks format from Pro Skater with more story based activities and challenges. They've added a lot from skate culture into this game with the ability to create your own graphics and style and even tag up graf that you designed yourself. They've also featured Bam Margera much more prominently in this edition; who is famous not only for being one of the world top skateboarders, but for appearing in Jackass and his own CYK which take the world of offkey japery to extremes. It's a solid game that if you love skating you will be all over this game; for non-skaters its probably less awe-inspiring but definitely worth a shot. Also I have to mention that this does include a classic mode which is basically all the best of the Tony Hawks Pro Skater series rolled into one.

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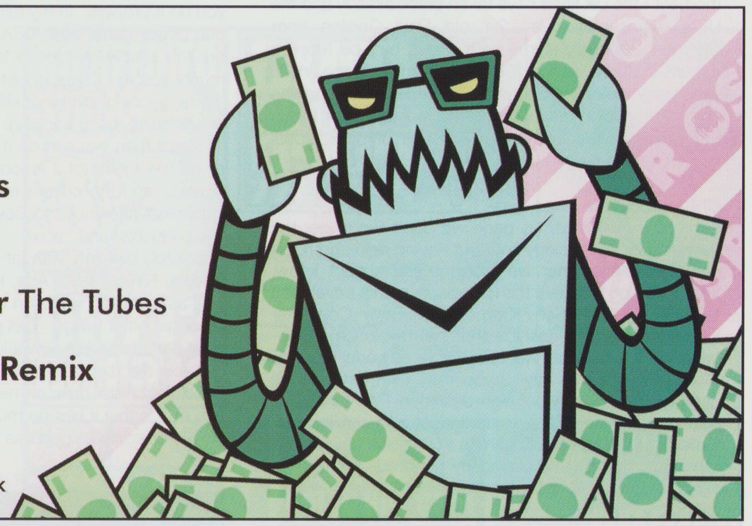

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RZA

It has definitely been (for use of a better term) a year of great comebacks in the realms of Hip-Hop, Brand Nubian, Pharcyde, Krs 1 have all dropped new albums for 2004. Though to my knowledge none have dropped an album heavier than the Wu-Tang Clan with the release of their live dvd which accompanies the full length LP "Disciples Of The 36 Chambers: Chapter 1". Which sees the whole clan re-united once again for a banger of a live show recorded in California performing to thousands eager fans in what could be a one off event. It features every classic track from the original masters of the 36 Chambers and has cemented the wu-tang clan forever as one of the livest acts of an era. I managed to catch up with the RZA in London for a few words about the new and old projects that he and the rest of the crew have been involved in and why they have been out in the wilderness for such a long period of time. So grab your scriptures and prepare for a lesson in da mystery of chess boxing but watch yer back cuz the RZA spits his words razor sharp……

…To take you back to my first influences they revolved around the people I grew up with and the peeps that surrounded me at the time. The GZA is my cousin so he had a big part in enlightening me to the Hip-Hop culture, the jams in the park and just the whole vibe of what the music was about, so my real influences are not based on big names just the environment that I was raised in. I was going to Block Party's when I was 6 or 7 years old in about 1976. I would see artists like Grandmaster Flash, Kool Herc, Grand wizard Theodore, it was amazing, they would bring their sound systems down and just throw down for the people there and then. Whether it was battling or just a party there was always a vibe and it was the "good days" you know? So that was my whole foundation for what my music represents.

I met a lot of the Wu-Tang crew from going to the jams and also through being around the Staten Isle neighbourhood. Me and Raekwon go back to the 2nd grade while GZA as I said and O.D.B are my cousins, I hooked up with Method Man & Inspektah Deck when I was about 14. They had always been around the hood so we vibed almost instantly. That's the thing with us because we have known each other for such a time, plus we grew up in the same environment so we approach our music as a unit. It's all about the neighbourhood as far as the Wu-Tang are concerned…

As far as work outside of the Wu goes I got involved in making movie sound tracks. When I had finished producing the Cuban links album I found that my production had more of a cinematic appeal. I do not just make music for people to rap over, I like to be able to take the listener on a journey. That led me in to the Ghost-dog project. Which was good for me as I had a lot of solo aspirations inside me at the time. So eventually I was approached to do this film score for a martial arts based film, it was ironic in some respects but it was also a great opportunity for me to write music which had more of a wide appeal and also had a sense of atmosphere due to the films subject matter.

So now we have reformed the Wu-Tang clan to bring you the new CD/Dvd which is a live show that was recorded at San Bernadino, CA 07,17,2004. There are not a lot of live hip-hop albums out there. You have stuff like Otis Reading, Donny Hathaway all these great artists have done performances which have been recorded and put out as a live format. But artists have not really done that in respect of a full length live hip-hop album, which is odd seeing as the main aspect of the music is the live shows. Back in the day when you had a block party they would be recorded and for the next 2 weeks or so that tape would be floating around the neighbourhood. So that was what we are trying to achieve with the "Disciples of the 36 Chambers: Chapter 1" we trying to take you back to the old days, the whole Wu-Tang clan is on stage zoning out and vibing off each other throwing out freestyles and just taking in the essence of hip-hop. Plus in years to come we have a documentation of Wu live which you can just boom in your car or anywhere you like. We are just trying to spread that energy that we have on stage so that people who do not get the chance to see us live can really appreciate and vibe with what we do without actually having to be at the show. With the Dvd its an actual chance to see all the crew together once again as you know O.D.B has been in jail, Meth has been off doing movies so it has been a long time since we have had the whole Clan on stage along with Cappadonna and that's a piece of history right there. It was important for us personally to document this and also give the fans something special to accompany the Album.

At the moment I feel that there is a resurgence of the older crews for example the Fugees have just got back together and even Tribe Called Quest is thinking of re-grouping so there's a vibe brewing in the sense that people are now thinking all we got is us to bring the people some new Shit. Because you go through this music industry and you know hip-hop artists have been collaborating with a lot of different people over these last 5-10yrs getting money and getting popular then they scattered and never got the opportunity to return to their roots. I think that now hip-hop is becoming a mature thing, it brings with it a sense of responsibility, dedication and understanding and a lot of groups are realising that "Yo we can only rely on ourselves now" and they are bringing it back together. When we first came out as a big group of Mc's and producers we kind of influenced other artists and groups to do the same, Cuz before that you did not have a whole group of people being signed it was usually 1 artist who would bring on guests from their neighbourhood. When we dropped Enter the Wu-Tang it inspired other crews and clicks and organisations to move together as units as there is definitely power in numbers.

As far as the future is concerned there are more tours planned for next year plus a new Wu-tang album, I am looking forward to doing a show on the East Coast back home at metal-lands with the NYC crowd. We used to tear it up but were thrown out for being too unruly. In fact there was a point when we were all banned from every club in NY but now things have changed the Wu on a whole is more mature and more focused on bringing the crowd some rawness that they can bang their heads to. The RZA's last words: Hip-Hop is here for-ever, Wu-Tang is here for-ever, Peace to all the fans world wide……

Since this interview took place the mighty Ol' Dirty Bastard of the Wu-tang clan passed away. With that in mind we'd like to dedicate this piece to his memory.